

Bi Women

The Newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network

Stormy Weather

As this issue goes to print, the United States and its allies have been at war with Iraq for six long days, and the Soviet Army has attacked Lithuania and Latvia. We are being told that the war in the Middle

East may last much longer than originally thought. At a time when we need a "Peace Dividend" more than ever — when there are more homeless than ever, when we are living with and dying from AIDS, when children of the world are starving by the thousands — the Gulf War is consuming hundreds of millions of dollars a day, and our children's generation will be handed the bill.

These are hard times, and hard times can either bring people together or split them into competing factions. May we remember the things we have learned as bisexuals in a heterosexist world: Celebrate diversity. Build bridges, not walls. Make love, not war.

— Kathleen H.

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The following is an excerpt from a letter sent on August 10, 1990, to Gay Community News in Boston from the Arab Lesbian and Bisexual Women's Network in San Francisco.

... We ask you to think while you read the newspapers and watch the news. To look for an anti-Arab bias. To be aware. How different is



Stormy Weather continued on page 6

A Call to Action

At Harvard University, on October 26-28, 1990, the "Fourth Annual Lesbian, Bisexual & Gay Studies Conference" was held. It could be the last, unless we, the bisexual community and our allies, act quickly and in large numbers. This was actually the FIRST annual Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Studies Conference, in that it was the first conference to include "Bisexual" in the title. The planning committee for 1991 has already decided to omit "Bisexual" from the title of next year's conference.

Over 50 "out" bisexuals attended this conference. Being officially recognized was important to us all. Even with the inclusion of "Bisexual" in the title, many bis at the conference chose to remain closeted. Even with this inclusion, only a few papers dealing with the topic of bisexuality were submitted, and of these only TWO were accepted. (A few other panelists came out as bisexual during their presentations.) We don't want to lose the ground we've gained; we need more recognition, not less.

Some of us who attended the conference also attended a bisexual caucus after the final plenary session. We came up with a plan of action to "Save the Title."

Here's what you can do:

1. Include this letter in your local newsletter. [A full article about the conference appeared in the Dec./Jan. '91 BiWomen.]
2. Send letters to or call the 1991 planning committee. [Their address and phone numbers are at the end of this article.]
3. Ask your lesbian, gay & bisexual friends to call or write.
4. If you are a writer or an academic, submit a paper to be presented at the conference.

When you call or write, ask that the title be amended to include bisexuals, that more papers on bisexuality be accepted, and that we again

Gay Studies continued on page 4

BBWN News

Honor Roll

Ann G.
Charnan B.
Maria V.
Stephanie B.
Sue S.
Lynne L.
Nina C.
Gail Z.
Bobbi K.
Kathleen H.
Rebecca G.
Sharon G.
Claire M.
Pam E.
Laura S.
Sue S.
Robyn O.
Marcia D.
Tess H.D.
Susan R.
Rebecca K.

BiWomen is published
bi-monthly, of course.

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Ingrid Sell, Laura Sachs,
Sharon Gonsalves,
Stephanie Berger, Robyn
Ochs, Kathleen Hepburn

Announcing: "BI-FEST '91"

A Bi Festival During Pride Weekend!

A bi festival is being planned for the first weekend in June (7-9) to coincide with the Pride March in Boston. A not quite tentative schedule follows:

A reception/video night on Friday, our traditional pre-pride BBWN brunch Saturday morning, a dance (alcohol-free) on Saturday night, "bagel madness" Sunday morning and a couple of workshop sessions Sunday, late morning/early afternoon. The initial work has been done. We have locations secured for most of the events. We will definitely need people to work at these events and do some organizing beforehand (publicity, workshop topics/facilitators, etc.)

 **For all full-fledged or budding organizers and kibitzers:**

*There will be a meeting
Monday, Feb. 11th, 6 - 8 p.m. at
The Center, 338 Newbury Street,
Boston, to fine tune all the details.*

We want you, we *need* you to help us make this Bi-Fest absolutely BOFFO!! Events will include: brunching, marching, munching, dancing, lunching, laughing, crunching, talking, video viewing, and other neat stuff!! (Now aren't you the least bit curious after a list of events like this? Hmmm?) See y'all there! Hugs and kisses!

— Laura Sachs

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

We still need volunteers


to staff the BBWN/BBMN office at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Boston, one Monday evening a month from 6 to 9pm (or a portion thereof). Anyone can do it! We will provide all the necessary training. Call (617) BIS-MOVE to volunteer - leave a message for our wonderful volunteer coordinator Stephanie Berger.

BBWN Financial Report

January 1, 1990 - December 31, 1990

Income	4,246.92
Expenses:	
Postage	1,239.73
Printing	1,895.73
Supplies	102.60
T-shirts	537.50
Rent	120.00
Telephone LD	64.40
Archives	43.50
Bank fees	5.00
Subscriptions	30.00
Advertising	30.00
Misc.	8.00
(total)	4,076.46

Balance as of 1/1/90:	3,381.28
Balance as of 1/1/91:	3,541.74

 **DEADLINE** for the
April/May issue:
Friday, March 8 at noon.

All submissions in writing, please.

Include your name and phone number if possible. Please specify if and how you would like to be credited for your submission. Send articles, calendar entries, letters, art, news and views to:

BiWomen, BBWN
338 Newbury Street, 202C
Boston, MA 02115

Thanks!

Letters

Dear BiWomen,

For several years, I have been attending events put on by ECBN [East

Coast Bisexual Network] &

BBWN. Attendees have been friendly, interesting, inclusive, & young. I rarely meet anyone in her upper 40's - much less in her 50's (like me) or 60's. Is

BBWN ageist? Do we attract & keep older

members? Is there a way for us to meet each other? If there are older women members out there, please contact me. Some of us older women up in Maine would like to meet some of you & maybe even start an older women's group.

On a completely different topic: another first! We believe this was the first time the word Bisexual has ever appeared in the printed program of the National Association of Social Workers' annual conference. It was in Nov., at "Social Work '90" in Boston. Woody Glenn, president of ECBN (& also a social worker) prepared, advised, & assisted me beforehand and then co-facilitated a networking session. As we had hoped, the title "Bisexual Issues" drew both therapists working with bi clients & bi therapists. Some of us, of course, were both.

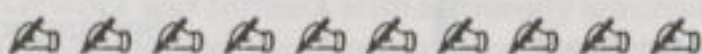
To continue the work of the networking session, I will be starting a little newsletter for attendees & others. As requested, I will enclose some articles about bisexuality. I will also try to promote discussions of the special issues bisexual clients may raise in therapy. Suggestions as to articles &/or topics, and contributions & comments from any of you would be welcome. They can be sent to me c/o the ECBN office.

I'm hoping some of us will be able to do a Bi 101 course at Social Work '91.

Finally: "Gays & Lesbians Are Out Of The Closet. Are therapists still in the dark?" is the title of the Jan-Feb '91 issue of Family Therapy Networker. I hope some of you will read it & think about what we want therapists to know about how bi lifestyles are different from both straights' & gays'. If FTN agrees to do at least one article on bis (as I will request), they'll need to know what you want in it. Contact me with your suggestions c/o the ECBN office [at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02115].

Bi, bi, for now.

Bobbi Keppel



Greetings Bi's,

I am a student in the University of Akron's Department of Psychology. I am currently

working on a study concerning sexual orientation, sex-role, and life satisfaction. I am looking for bisexual individuals interested in participating in this study and am contacting your organization in hopes of gaining the support of your members. All information would be collected in such a manner that would insure the anonymity of the participants.

The survey that each interested individual would fill out consists of the following:

- A cover letter explaining the study.
- An informed consent form to be filled out by each individual and sent back separately from the survey forms (a stamped, addressed envelope will be supplied).
- A 20-item demographics questionnaire concerning the personal statistics of the individual.
- The Satisfaction With Life Scale which consists of 5 items.
- The Klein Sexual Orientation Grid which looks at seven variables of an individual's sexual orientation with regards to the past, present, and ideal.
- A modified version of the Extended Personal Attributes Questionnaire which looks at sex-role with regards to present and personal ideal.

The survey takes approximately thirty minutes to fill out and will be sent back by each individual (a stamped, addressed envelope will be supplied). Follow-up information will be sent to your organization upon completion of the study concerning the results. This will occur in late spring/early summer. Any participating individual with questions resulting from the survey may contact me at the address below.

I will need a minimum of eighty participants and am hopeful that your members [as well as non-members] will be interested in joining members from other bisexual groups in helping to expand our knowledge about bisexuality.

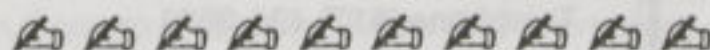
Sincerely,

E. D. Wertz

Dept. of Psychology

University of Akron

Akron, OH 44325-4301



The following letter was recently sent to Gay Community News, Boston, Mass.

Dear GCN:

Hurray for Maida Tilchen's [GCN, December 9-15, 1990] refreshing and succinct take on Holly Near's sexual identity! To wit: "Holly's resistance to the use of the term 'bisexual', seems either bi-phobic or uninformed... I don't know why she is unaware that bisexuals may

Letters continued on page 7

Remember our address:

BiWomen

BBWN

338 Newbury Street, 202C

Boston, MA 02115

Bi Pride graphic

Q uotes

Madonna, in response to MTV's banning of her new video, "Justify My Love," a fantasy-filled video that includes bisexuality, cross-dressing and mild sadomasochism:

"Why is it that people are willing to go to a movie and watch someone get blown to bits for no reason and nobody wants to see two girls kissing or two men snuggling?"

— *From the Boston Globe, November 29, 1990*

Gay Studies, from page 1

be given an official bisexual caucus at next year's conference.

If you want more information, call (617) BIS-MOVE.

Thank you very much for your support.

— The Bisexual Caucus at the 4th Annual Lesbian, Bisexual & Gay Studies Conference



The following is an excerpt from a letter sent by Boston's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Speakers Bureau to the 1991 conference organizers.

... We feel it is important to make a clear statement that bisexuals are part of the lesbian and gay community. This has become necessary because of the long history of excluding bisexuals from gay and lesbian activities and organizations. Two local examples:

In 1990 bisexuals were deliberately excluded from the Gay Pride March in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Bay Windows, a gay and lesbian weekly in Boston, refused to print an article about the 1990 Bisexual Conference in San Francisco on the grounds that it was a "peripheral issue."

These are only two recent examples of bisexual denial in the gay and lesbian community. There are thousands going back many years. We do not have a history of denying other members of our community the way we have denied bisexuals. Yet bisexuals have always been part of our community. Fearing rejection, many deliberately stay invisible. Those of us who identify as exclusively gay or lesbian should know very well the pain involved in such denial.

Our membership feels that the inclusion of bisexuals in the title one year and their exclusion the next, sends a clear, if not intentional, message that they are not welcome. An academic conference should be open to an

honest and complete discussion of all aspects of our lives. Bisexuals must be included in that discussion. We urge you to welcome them and their work by restoring the word bisexual to the title of the 1991 Lesbians and Gay Studies Conference.

Sincerely,

Arthur R. Cohen
Secretary

The Bureau urges us to send our own letters to conference organizers at the following address:

Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference #5
Monica Dorenkamp or Beryle Chandler
CCACC
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
8 Bishop Place
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Phone numbers:

Beryle Chandler at the CACC (908) 932-8687
Monica Dorenkamp (908) 932-6509.



Seasons

Boyfriends in the summer and
Women lovers during the year
Are the seasons of the sun's
Passion fire and winter's
Warmth like a sparking tree.
And I have loved men in
The spring and swum like
Mermaids, or tropical fish
On the longest days
So perhaps there are no
Patterns just rotations of the
Planet as she tumbles
Through space
Love is the only cycle
Spinning, spinning
Deep
Seeking no gender
Emanating
Woman.

by [redacted] © 12/90

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Cambridge, MA 02139

The 1990 National Bisexual Conference

A report on the San Francisco conference *

by Ingrid Sell

If I had to pick one word to characterize the typical bisexual, it would have to be "multifarious." Bisexuals, like bisexuality, are hard to pin down. Embracing a sexuality that considers everyone a potential lover just naturally seems to go hand-in-hand with a world-view that embraces a rainbow of diverse choices in all areas of life. Bisexuals comprise an even more varied group of people than, for instance, fit under labels such as "gay people" or "feminists."

So it was no small task for BiPol, a Bisexual/Lesbian/Gay political action group from the San Francisco Bay area, to bring together a colorful variety of people – from political agitators to joyous celebrants; the shy, tentatively coming-out to brashly bold and "In Your Face"; celibate and wildly sexual; monogamous and non-monogamous; young, old and of nearly every race and ethnicity represented in this country, for the first National Bisexual Conference.

The idea for this conference, which was held in San Francisco from June 20-24 (1990), was hatched 3 years ago, at the 1987 National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, where women from Boston Bisexual Women's Network spearheaded the effort to create a National Bisexual Contingent for the March. Out of their organizing efforts at the March, the idea for a National umbrella organization of bisexuals was born. With input from bisexual groups across the country – as well as help from some longer-standing and more experienced groups in Britain – the foundations for a national network of Bisexuals were laid. The Conference was conceived as the most appropriate means of bringing together representatives from Bisexual and Bi-positive groups from around the country – as well as interested individual bisexuals – in order to develop a national organization.

After four days of heady, spirited and sometimes combative organizing meetings, the North American Multicultural Bisexual Network was formed, with a strongly feminist agenda that includes a commitment to breaking down divisions based on race, class, age, and physical disability as well as gender, in addition to working to combat Biphobia and bisexual invisibility in both the straight and the Lesbian/

Gay communities.

But the conference involved far more than political strategizing. Workshops were offered on a wide range of topics, including: spirituality; publishing; non-traditional relationships; gender identity; AIDS and HIV; safe sex; "Bisexual Women in Heterosexual Relationships" and "Bisexual and Lesbian Women: A Dialogue"; intimacy; coming out bi; issues for therapists; and workshops emphasizing building a multicultural community. In addition, there was a smorgasbord of cultural presentations, including musicians, poetry readings, dance and theater. A highlight of the conference was the reading of a proclamation passed by San Francisco Mayor Art Agnos (which was signed by four city supervisors) declaring June 23 to be "Bisexual Pride Day in San Francisco."

A national symbol was chosen out of dozens of suggestions from conference attendees: overlapping pink and blue triangles that create a third, lavender triangle in the middle. This design was chosen over others (many of which incorporated the yin-yang symbol in some form) – partly because it is already in existence, having been printed on thousands of "Bisexual Pride" t-shirts that have been for sale around the country over the past year; yet also because it springs from the gay pink triangle, thus honoring the roots of the nascent bisexual movement in the struggle for lesbian and gay liberation, and the similarity of issues.

The newly-forming Bisexual Movement carries within it the potential to break down barriers that still divide other communities. While most feminist, lesbian/gay and other progressive groups pay lip service to honoring diversity, actual acceptance of members who stray from certain – stated or not – norms is far from reality. The diffuse nature of the bisexual community forces its members to stretch the boundaries of who they normally would accept as being part of their own communities. To people who are not bisexual, this raises the uncomfortable possibility that the boundaries they believed to be absolute will need to be redefined.

As Joan Hill, a radical feminist and lesbian/bisexual from Seattle describes it, Bisexuals are a threat to everyone: "To the Gay movement, we bring back choice; to "accepting" straights we're a threat to the idea that we're just like them except in bed."

Having had to live with complexity in the area of desire has prepared many bisexuals to look beyond limited choices in other areas. Indeed, it is because bisexuality encompasses far more than merely a choice of lovers that it is seen as so threatening to so many people. Lani Kaahumanu, a radical feminist bisexual activist

SF Bi Conference continued on page 7



* There's always room for one more

Q uotes

*Susie (Sexpert)
Bright, long-time
editor of the
Lesbian Sex
Magazine On Our
Backs, about the
feeling of betrayal
some lesbians
have that their
out lesbian role
model is actually
bisexual:*

"There is this fear that maybe Susie Bright discovered she likes dick better, and what are we going to do? Isn't it your worst nightmare come true? For everyone out there that's worried about that, relax — I can't stop feeling the way I feel about women. I didn't decide to start, and I can't stop, can't shut it off like a tap."

— From an interview with Laura Pierce in Gay Community News, Nov. 18-24, 1990

Stormy Weather, from page 1

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait from the U.S. invasion of Panama? Both put in place "puppet" governments. Where was the world outcry when the U.S. invaded Panama? Why is the U.S. economy more important than the Iraqi economy? the Panamanian economy? the Palestinian economy? the Lebanese economy? Where was the condemnation of Israel when that country invaded and occupied Lebanon, murdering 10,000 people? Israel has invaded and controls territories from three Arab countries — Lebanon, Syria and Palestine. Ask yourself why can Israel annex East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights; and occupy the Gaza Strip and the West Bank without public outcry let alone a military blockade?

What have you heard from the people of Kuwait? Since when did oil in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia become U.S. ("our") oil? Why is the U.S. so willing to invest money to wage a war against Iraq and not invest money and resources to help people with cancer and AIDS? It is estimated that it will cost \$10 million a day or \$300 million a month to pay for the costs of sending 50,000 troops to Saudi Arabia; this is over and above what the Pentagon would spend anyway in salaries and other expenses for peace-time operations (San Francisco Chronicle, August 13, 1990, page A11). The price goes up as the number of troops increase. [Estimates as of mid-January are \$500 million a day. — Ed.] Why not such a quick and concerned effort to respond to the needs of homeless people? To the needs of women, children and men who suffer from sexual assault, abuse and incest?

We ask that you ask yourself — what is the Arab perspective, to look beyond the blatant imperialistic, racist and neocolonialist disinformation. . . .

Ask yourself, what information is presented in the press about Arab people, Arab leaders and Arab countries/culture/history. . . .

*Arab Lesbian and Bisexual
Women's Network
P.O. Box 460526
San Francisco, CA 94114*

[Letter was originally sent to *Gay Community News*, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116. \$39/year (49 issues)]

Letters, from page 3

share the political, if not the sexual, ideals of lesbian feminism."

I first met Holly in the early 1970s when my band, The New Harmony Sisterhood Band, shared a gig with her in the then-Cambridge Red Bookstore basement. I asked her at that

time to contribute a song to our women's songbook, *All Our Lives*. She said that she didn't sing "women's songs" because she saw other struggles are more important. But she was writing women's songs, even though she didn't choose to label them that. When she came out in 1976, "Imagine my Surprise..."

I respect Holly's dedication and work immensely, but I can't help feeling a bit of *deja vu* with her reluctance to invoke the "eighties" meaning of bisexual. We bisexual feminists would hope that our last eight years of organizing have reached her and many others. Thank you, Maida!

In Harmony and
Sisterhood,
Marcia Deihl

SF Bi Conference, from page 5

from San Francisco and one of the conference's organizers, puts it this way: "Bisexuals challenge the fundamental value system of either/or dichotomies like heterosexual/homosexual; white/non-white; us/them, etc. . . . Bisexuality says differences are to be celebrated and appreciated rather than used to set up barriers between people."

Most bisexuals have acutely felt the barriers others have thrown up in their faces, often under the guise of "liberation" movements. Many times at the conference, women spoke of joyfully identifying as lesbians when they discovered their attractions to women, yet being devastated by the isolation they felt when they fell in love with a man and were unable to speak about it to their friends; or of feeling powerful attractions to both genders and having their truth dismissed as "merely a phase" or "simply a fear of coming out all the way". Over and over, conference participants would preface their statements with: "I've never told anyone this, but..."; or "I've never been able to say this out loud — and have it be accepted . . ."

Told that they do not exist, many bisexuals have opted to either pass for straight, or have identified as lesbian or gay, simply in order to have a community to align with. Many women cited the animosity of a lot of lesbians towards bisexual women who pass in the gay community, and yet noted that to be openly bisexual within the lesbian community is to risk ostracism. Bisexual women are accused of everything from "taking women's energy and giving it to men" to "bringing AIDS into the lesbian community." Simply by virtue of their desires, bisexuals are accused of innate irresponsibility, even by people who otherwise champion the fact that HIV infection is not attached to the fact of sexual orientation but is transmitted through unsafe behaviors.

*This article will be concluded
in the next issue of BiWomen.*

Typists
needed!

For the
newsletter in
the first two
weeks of
March.

Call (617) BIS-
MOVE to volunteer.



Discharge of Gays from U.S. Military May Be 'Deferred'

ATLANTA, January 10, 1991 — In an abrupt policy shift on the eve of possible war in the Persian Gulf, new Department of Defense procedures may allow openly gay personnel to serve in the military based on the services' "operational needs."

A Defense Department spokesman said that although regulations barring homosexuals from serving in the military still stand, the discharge of known gay personnel may now be "deferred" until they are no longer needed for Operation Desert Shield.

The new procedures were established by the Pentagon's "Stop Loss Policy," which permits the military to delay administrative separations of service personnel unless they are involved in actual misconduct.

"Any administrative procedure is dependent on operational considerations of the unit that would administer such proceedings," Lieutenant Commander Ken Satterfield, a Pentagon spokesman, said Thursday.

"Just because a person says they're gay, that doesn't mean they can stop packing their bags."

The need to have fully staffed units will take precedence over enforcing noncriminal infractions, he said.

"This doesn't abdicate the rules," said Satterfield. "You just have to establish priorities."

The "Stop Loss Rule" was put into effect for all the active-duty and reserve components of the Army, as well as the medical corps of the Navy, on December 17. The rules cover service personnel who might normally be separated from the service for any number of reasons, ranging from end of enlistment to infractions of regulations.

The Pentagon policy statements have made no specific mention of homosexuality, and the possible application of these rules to gays did not become apparent until this week.

Gay-rights lawyers say the new policy will have a dramatic impact on gay servicemen and women, most of whom are discharged through administrative separations.

In the past, the Defense Department has strenuously maintained that the presence of homosexuals in the military represents a threat to the morale, discipline, security and recruiting potential of the armed services. The military usually moves quickly to separate any service member who says he or she

is gay.

In recent weeks, the San Francisco Chronicle has learned, when several gay reserve personnel told commanders that they are gay, the commanders have responded that they must first be sent to Saudi Arabia, although they may be discharged when they return home.

On Wednesday, Reserve Support Specialist Donna Lynn Jackson of San Diego became the first gay reservist to go public. Although Jackson, who serves with the 129th Evacuation Hospital Unit at Fort Ord, Calif., said she was eager to serve in Operation Desert Shield, she has also asked for Army assurances that she will not be discharged once she returns.

A final determination of Jackson's case is pending, but Captain Tom Barth, a legal adviser at Fort Ord, said Jackson was being attached to an administrative unit that is permanently stationed at the base.

Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass., who is homosexual, said, "It is the lowest form of hypocrisy for the Pentagon to maintain that gays and lesbians are unfit for military service while it sends them off to risk their lives in the Gulf. And it is utterly inconceivable to me that these same men and women, upon the loyal completion of their tours, will be kicked out of the service because they are gay."

Mary Newcombe, staff attorney with the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, a gay advocacy group, said, "I'm ecstatic in that this shows that the military knows that gay and lesbian soldiers are extremely well qualified to serve in the armed forces."

Other gay reservists facing possible service in the Gulf said they fear that their homosexuality, which they had been able to keep secret during weekend reserve tours, could make them the subject of harassment once they are sent to the close quarters of Saudi Arabia.

"I talked to a military lawyer and he said the only way I could get out was if I was willing to become a court case," said one West Coast reservist whose commander intends to retain gays in his unit for the duration of the gulf crisis.

"I don't want my face all over the front page," he said. "What would happen to me if I still had to go after all the publicity?"

A Pentagon spokesman, however, was not sympathetic. "You have to wonder about the ethics of people who sign up, take the benefits and then want out. It's not right," he said.

— Randy Shilts, as reported in
The New York Times, 1-10-91

Q uotes

Holly Near,
in her auto-
biography
Fire in the
Rain... Singer
in the Storm:

"I felt like a
lesbian when I
was with a
woman and a
lesbian making
love to a man
when I was with
a man."



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Film Review

Henry and June

Reviewed by Fennel

Henry and June seems the perfect film to review for a bisexual newsletter.

The three main characters are Henry Miller, the writer; his bisexual wife, June; and Anais Nin, the writer. Anais' husband, Hugo, is a secondary character.

Philip Kaufman's *Unbearable Lightness of Being* also dealt with a love triangle, but *Henry and June* explores the issue much more fully.

Kaufman juxtaposes the world of art and passion against the world of business and stability. Anais represents the former world and Hugo, the latter. In a conversation together, Anais expresses her yearning to know creative people, real people. Hugo replies, "Estate planning can be creative!" She responds, "I need to know people who are alive."

This statement serves as an entree into the world they will enter, and the adventures which will rock their stable world, or at least Anais'. Anais is the driving force, with sexuality as the means to the end of becoming alive and real. Whether she is successful in this end, that is for the viewer to decide.

Through the events that follow, Anais becomes involved in Henry and June's world. The common madonna/whore dichotomies often found in films are employed here. Kaufman plays Anais off less as one or the other, but certainly as a less innocent woman than she was at the start. His resistance of pure dichotomies suggests his tolerance for, and exploration of, ambiguity.

Hollywood could do well to explore this more, it makes these characters rounder.

June leaves at one point, during which time Henry and Anais become lovers. Upon returning she muses out loud, "I don't know who I came back for." That statement expresses the seriousness of her love for both Henry and Anais separately, attesting to her bisexuality.

Shortly thereafter, there is a shot of Henry in one bedroom, and June in another, and Anais is standing between them, not knowing where to go, torn.

To say much more would give away the film. I close by recommending this film as worthwhile food for thought on bisexuality. ▼

Book Review

Fire in the Rain... Singer in the Storm

Reviewed by Sharon Gonsalves

I'm going to Holly Near's concert tonight and thinking about how I ought to review her autobiography for BiWomen. I read the book last month and really enjoyed it, except for the chapter where she talks about her sexual identity. Holly will probably get plenty of mail from lesbians and bisexuals alike trying to convince her to stop calling herself a lesbian and start identifying proudly as bisexual.

She lays out all the arguments for retaining a lesbian label — the same things I've heard myself say over and over again — but she can argue 'til she's blue in the face. Some lesbians will never accept that a woman who sleeps with men can consider herself a lesbian whatever her reasons. I've stopped arguing and stopped referring to myself as a lesbian, but I still go to "lesbian events" and align myself with lesbians and gays in political discussions and in my workplace. I enjoy working in a women-only video production group and with women incest survivors. Sometimes it is assumed by women around me that I am a lesbian (my relative anonymity allows me to "pass" unlike Holly Near whose notoriety follows her everywhere) and that's okay, but I try to come out proudly as bisexual to those I have a lot of contact with.

It frustrates me when well-known lesbians like Holly Near and Jan Clausen begin to have sexual relationships with men, but are unwilling to claim their bisexuality. It makes me see that we, as bisexuals, have so much work to do in educating the public about who we are. All the stereotypes must still be running rampant if people are reluctant to feel proud about being capable of loving both women and men. I get the impression that people generally think that there is no politics associated with bisexuality except maybe something about "free love." Calling myself bi is as much of a political statement for me as calling myself lesbian was in the early eighties. The politics of bisexuality is a politics of acceptance of whatever people choose to do in their personal relationships. Hopefully that acceptance also translates into other areas of difference. Holly Near has been living bi politics for years without labeling herself bisexual. She sees herself as a bridge-builder among many different groups of people. As bisexuals we can be a bridge of understanding between heterosexuals and gay men and lesbians.

Yes, it would be great if we had no need for labels and everyone could just be who they are without fear of violence or discrimination. We don't live in that world yet, so some of us are choosing to take up the torch and run with it. Me? I'm going to put on a tie and my bi pride button and go to Holly's concert wearing a smile. ▼

To Whom it May Concern:

Some minds are
like concrete—
all mixed up
and permanently set

Salada
TAG LINES

The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation publishes an excellent monthly newsletter reporting on defamation, homophobic lies or misrepresentations of gays and lesbians in the media — as well as pointing out the positive things people are saying or doing to help change stereotypes. The emphasis of the GLAAD newsletter is to encourage us to write letters to the people or institutions involved in the negative stereotyping, letting them know how we feel — not only to point out their factual errors or that we do not appreciate their insults, but also to remind them that there are more of us than they know, and that our dollars are just as green as the fundamentalist reactionaries who may threaten boycotts. The Alliance also encourages us to write in support of those who are furthering change by depicting gay and lesbians in a realistic or positive light.

This page of BiWomen can be our own BAAD newsletter. Send us clippings from magazines or newspapers. Please be sure to include the source: publication name, date, page number, author, and an address to which we can write a response.

Ask Beth

Ask Beth; The Boston Globe, Thursday, April 5, 1990.

To a teenage woman whose girlfriend of four years has started seeing a boy, Beth responds, "Whether the girl you loved and lost is lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual, the problem is the same. Relationships don't last long in teenage . . . You will recover from your grief in time, and find someone new to love."

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Hooray for three choices! Beth seems to understand that sexuality isn't simply a dichotomy of homo or hetero, and that love is love, regardless of gender. Let's thank her for acknowledging bisexuality as a valid sexual orientation.

Ask Beth

c/o The Boston Globe

P.O. Box 2378

Boston, MA 02107-2378

Don't Ask Ruth?

In a recent Ask Dr. Ruth column a woman writes that she "had an experience with a woman that convinced me I was a lesbian." She subsequently became friends with and fell in love with a gay man. She says she "wants to make love to him, marry him and have his baby." He says he isn't sure about those things. She asks Dr. Ruth what she can do to persuade him.

Dr. Ruth responds that, although a gay man could father a child, it "would not be easy to live the rest of your life knowing the man you love is loving other men. Perhaps you are thinking that he will change his mind about being gay as you have apparently changed yours about being lesbian.

"If he's truly gay, he can't change! If you were truly lesbian, you wouldn't be so obsessed with this man, would you? You must discuss these questions with a therapist. Entering into a relationship with this man will cause pain and problems for both of you.

"Why not look for a straight man who can unequivocally commit to you and the children you might have together."

For some people, sexuality is, indeed, a solid and unchanging orientation — but it certainly is not that way for everyone. Let Dr. Ruth know that she needn't be *quite* so pessimistic. Bisexual (ever heard of the b-word, Doctor?) women and men are quite capable of living long, happy lives in a variety of relationships. And non-monogamy is not necessarily difficult, painful or problematic. It is only the pressures of a closed-minded society that makes life difficult for people in "non-traditional" relationships. Perhaps she's jumping to conclusions to say that a straight man would be an appropriate partner, given the woman's apparent experience with and understanding of homosexuality — a subject of which relatively few straight men are especially understanding.

Dr. Ruth

c/o The Boston Herald

P.O. Box 2096

Boston, MA 02106-2096



Q uotes

Pete Townshend of The Who, about the song "Rough Boys" (from their 1980 album Empty Glass):

"The song was a 'coming out,' an acknowledgment of the fact that I'd had a gay life, and that I understood what gay sex was about. It was a real acknowledgment of the fact that I'd been surrounded by people that I really adored — and was actually sexually attracted to — who were men. And that side of me that responded to those people was a passive side, a subordinate side."

— From the Boston Globe, November 8, 1990

Bi Teenager Takes the Colonel To Court

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. --An 18-year-old bisexual man filed a sexual harassment complaint in July against a Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise here in response to physical threats, verbal abuse and little response from his superiors.

Tom Bills had just moved to Sacramento from Washington and had become friends with a female employee. When he told her he was bisexual, Bills said she told everyone in the restaurant, according to the Bay Area Reporter. Bills said that harassment by fellow male employees began right away and continued even though he informed his supervisor of the incidents. The second time Bills went to his manager, he said he was told to ignore the harassment.

Soon afterwards, the district manager's son, who is a Mormon, came in and told Bills "gay people will be the first to go when God comes back." Bills was also told by a co-worker that "they should go to San Francisco and shoot gay people."

After months of harassment, Bills quit his job. Although officials have told Bills his case could take up to two years, he says he is willing to pursue it because, "I don't want anyone to go through the stress that I went through."

— Reported by Susan Schmitz in Gay Community News, September 16-22, 1990

Anything That Moves

LONG BEACH, CALIF. — The Bay Area Bisexual Network is launching an extensive quarterly magazine, titled "Anything That Moves: Beyond the Myths of Bisexuality."

Managing Editor Karla Rossi explains that the title of the new magazine "takes the negative stereotype" that says bisexuals fuck anything that moves "and redefines it as 'movement,' moving away from limiting stereotypes."

It replaces the BABN Newsletter. Subscribers to Bisexuality — News, Views, and Networking will receive "Anything That Moves" for the remainder of their subscriptions. Bisexuality will take an extended (and possibly permanent) hiatus while ATM gets off the ground.

For more information about ATM, including subscriptions (\$25 a year), write to BABN, 2404 California St., Box 24, San Francisco, CA 94115 or call (415) 564-BABN.

Bisexuality will continue to collect news and write it for ATM. Send your news items and announcements to Gibbin Publications, P.O. Box 20917, Long Beach, CA 90801, or call them in, collect, to (213) 597-2799. You can also fax c/o BIs At The Center, attention Gary North at (213) 433-6428.

— Reported in Bisexuality — News, Views and Networking, December 1990

New Newsletter Hits Penn.

PHILADELPHIA, PA — The first issue of BiFocus appeared this winter. Published quarterly, the attractive eight-page newsletter serves the Philadelphia Bisexual Community.

BiFocus, P.O. Box 30372, Philadelphia, PA 19103. \$12/year.

Suggested Reading

In the Nov./Dec. Utne Reader (p.21), bisexual activist Lani Kaahumanu writes of the growing visibility of the bisexual community. Her excellent article, Bisexuals Battle for Acceptance, draws from the many new writings and anthologies on bisexuality. "Along with the higher public profile of bisexuals," she writes, "has come a lively debate . . . about why so many of us need to draw such sharp lines between the different sexual identities and behaviors."

Utne Reader, P.O. Box 1974, Marion, OH 43306-2074. \$24/yr. (6 issues)

Betsy Rose

Betsy Rose will perform a benefit concert, "A Celebration of Healing and Recovery," on February 9 at 8:00 p.m. at the Arlington Street Church, 351 Boylston Street, Boston (corner of Arlington and Boylston Street; Green Line stop is Arlington). Telephone (617) 524-3137. Tickets \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door; half price for children and senior citizens. Opening act: Justina and Joyce. To benefit the Children's Hospital Outreach Program, the AIDS ACTION Committee, and programs of the Arlington Street Church. Tickets are available at New Words, Glad Day, Wood & Strings, and Arborway Video and Sound. ASL interpreted.

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(617) 332-3054

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Dialogue at The Center

DYKES DIALOGUE is an informal discussion group for women. The discussions will be on Sunday afternoons @ 4:00pm, at The Center, 338 Newbury St., Boston, and we have been expressly invited to participate!!

March 3rd the topic will be: "Bisexual Women in the Lesbian Community". Laura Sachs and Rebecca Kaplan will co-facilitate.

This is a wonderful opportunity to demythify bisexuals and bisexuality! Please come and join the discussion, the more the merrier! There will be other discussions including bisexuality in the upcoming months, so stay tuned!

We would like to thank Carol Wessling, the President of the Lesbian and Gay Community Center for asking us to participate in Dykes Dialogue, and in helping to build a more inclusive Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual community!

Mark your calendars now!!!

"BOSTON BI-FEST '91"

June 7-9,

GAY PRIDE WEEKEND!!

For details call
617-BIS-MOVE
(617-247-6683)

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Boston, MA 02115

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-- THE ECBN HOUSING GODDESSES



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BBWN

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CALENDAR

THE CENTER

is the Lesbian and Gay
Community Center, 338
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Boston, MA 02115.

Ongoing Events:



Sundays:

Alateen Group open to bisexual, lesbian and gay youth 22 and under who are affected by alcoholism in a family member or a close friend. 6pm. At the Center.



Mondays:

Bisexual Alcoholics Anonymous. 7:30-8:30pm, Mass. General Hospital, under Amphitheater (go past the Lower Amphitheater, take stairs up 3 flights). Closed speaker-discussion. Info: leave message for Ingrid at (617) 641-3281.



Tuesdays:

Bisexual Women's Rap Group. 7:30pm-10pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Central Square, Cambridge, MA. All women welcome. Call (617) 354-6658 for more info.



Wednesdays

Bisexual Children of Alcoholics. 7:30pm. An Al-Anon meeting for bisexual children of alcoholics. Mass. General Hospital, lower amphitheater (next to the emergency room entrance), Boston, MA. Call Marge at (617) 259-1559 for more info.

February 1 ♦ Friday

Swingtime Boston (Lesbian/Gay/Bi Swing & Ballroom Dance) Anniversary Sockhop! 8:15pm-midnight. Swing lesson 8:15-9pm. Smoke/alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. \$5. At the Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Harvard Square. Info: (617) 661-1792.

February 3 ♦ Sunday

Bi Space. 8pm. A friendly place for all bisexual people to come together and meet and talk about bisexual issues. No agenda or set topic, just a friendly space for whatever develops. \$2 donation requested. Sponsored by the East Coast Bisexual Network. At The Center, Room 202K. Info: (617) 247-6683.

February 4 ♦ Monday

BBWN Introductory Meeting. 7:30pm, Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, Mass. A safe space for women to learn about bisexuality - myths, theories, life experiences - and to connect with the Bi Community.

February 9 ♦ Saturday

Betsy Rose in a benefit concert: "A celebration of Healing and Recovery." See page xx for details.

February 11 ♦ Monday

BI-FEST MEETING!!! 6-8pm at The Center. See page 11 for details.

February 14 ♦ Thursday

Valentine's Day!

February 16 ♦ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Brunch. At 33 Dunster Street Restaurant (guess what the address is!) in Harvard Square, Cambridge. Meet outside at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

February 21 ♦ Thursday

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Speakers Bureau meeting. Topic: "Twice Blessed: Disabled and Gay." 8-10pm at The Center. Info: (617) 354-0133.

March 1 ♦ Friday

Swingtime Boston Lesbian/Gay/Bi Swing & Ballroom Dance, 8:15pm-midnight. Dance lessons 8:15-9pm. Dance the night away to the fabulous sounds of Cheek to Cheek, Boston's Lesbian and Gay Swing Orchestra. Smoke/alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. \$5. At the Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Harvard Square. Info: (617) 661-1792.

March 3 ♦ Sunday

Bisexual Women in the Lesbian Community. 4-6pm. At The Center. See page 11 for details. Info: (617) 247-2927.

March 3 ♦ Sunday

Bi Space. See February 3.

March 8 ♦ Friday

BiWomen Calendar deadline!!!!

March 11 ♦ Monday

BBWN Coordinating Committee meeting. Help us plan for Pride Weekend and Brunch, speak your mind or sit and listen. Meet the Movers and the Shakers - or be one yourself! At The Center. NEW TIME ⇐ 6-8pm. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

March 16 ♦ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Brunch. At Montilio's, 549 Boylston Street in Copley Square, Boston. Meet outside at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

March 21 ♦ Thursday

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Speakers Bureau meeting. Topic: "Twice Blessed: Minority and Gay." 8-10pm at The Center. Info: (617) 354-0133.

March 25 ♦ Monday

BBWN Volunteer Night to stuff the April/May newsletter. Please join us! It's much more fun when there's lots of us to stuff newsletters. Get your name on the Honor Roll! Meet wonderful women! 6-10pm. At The Center. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

April 1 ♦ Monday

BBWN Introductory Meeting. See February 4.

April 7 ♦ Sunday

Bi Space. 8pm. See February 3.

April 18 ♦ Thursday

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Speakers Bureau meeting. 8pm-10pm at The Center. Info: (617) 354-0133.

April 20 ♦ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Brunch. Good ol' DIM SUM BRUNCH at the New House of Toy Restaurant at 14 Hudson Street. Meet under the Chinatown Arch on Beech Street in Boston at 10:45am. Nearest T stops are South Station on the Red line and Chinatown on the Orange Line. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

April 21 ♦ Sunday

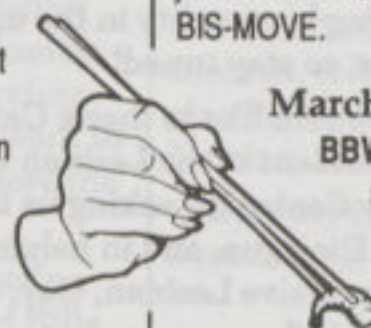
Lesbians and Bisexual Women - A Dialogue. Special workshop facilitated by Robyn Ochs and Leah Fygetakis. Sponsored by the Dykes Dialogue discussion series. All women welcome. 4-6pm. At The Center. Info: (617) 247-2927.

Looking ahead . . .

✓ MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

June 7-9 ♦ Friday - Sunday

BI-FEST '91!!! See page 11 for details.



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Bi Women

The Newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network

1989-90 BiWomen Survey Completed

by Robyn Ochs

At long last — here are preliminary (un-analyzed) results from the 1989-90 survey.

This is the third survey that we have conducted of bisexual women. The first, in 1984, yielded 62 responses. The second, in 1987, one-hundred-something. A record 255 women have responded to this most recent one. Interestingly, responses to all three surveys have been remarkably similar.

Following is a brief summary of what the data revealed. I am currently in the process of deciding what type of statistical analysis to do on the data.

For example, are women who identified themselves as non-monogamous older/younger, more radical/conservative, more comfortable/uncomfortable in their identities, more toward the ends or middle of the Kinsey scale than monogamous women? Are women on the west coast of the US more likely to . . . , etc. If you have any questions you would particularly like to see addressed, call (617) BIS-MOVE and leave your request.

1. The first question asked people to rate themselves on a Kinsey-like scale in terms of their sexual orientation.

The responses:

	←Heterosexual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Homosexual→
#:		1	20	51	78	64	33	3	
%:		0.4	7.8	20.0	30.6	25.1	12.9	1.2	

(Missing: 2%)

As you can see, the responses form a bell curve, with the largest number of respondents in the center, and decreasing numbers as you move toward the edges.

2. The second question asked people to plot their "lifestyle" on the same type of scale. Responses were as follows:

	←Heterosexual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Homosexual→
#:		25	38	52	32	46	33	22	
%:		9.8	14.9	20.9	12.5	18.0	13.3	8.9	

(Missing: 2.7%)

What is particularly interesting about these two questions is that, while the identity

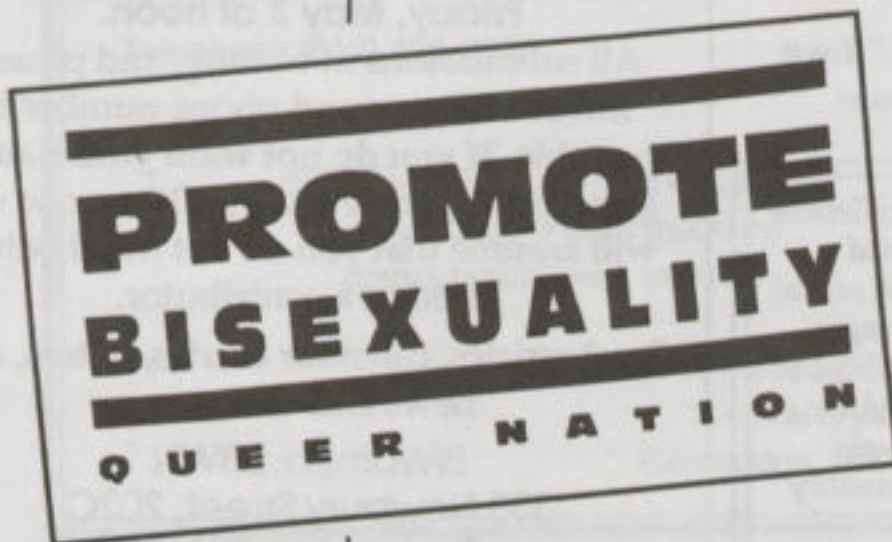
BiWomen Survey continued on page 6

Out Week Out of Touch?

The cover story of the February 6, 1991, issue of *Out Week* ("The Lesbian and Gay Newsmagazine") was titled "The Bisexual Revolution," and subtitled, "Deluded closet cases or the vanguard of the movement?"

The provocative title alone is worth a letter to the editor. Imagine *any* magazine with the headline, "Gay men — perverted wimps or decent, sensitive men? Or, "Lesbians — humorless man-haters or strong, self-realized women?" Why remind us of what our enemies call us? Why legitimize hateful stereotypes by displaying them on the front page? "Deluded closet cases" indeed! The article leaves the title question unanswered, thereby doing little to

OutWeek continued on page 11



BBWN News

Honor Roll

Valerie O.
Robin D.
Gail Z.
Maria V.
Laura S.
Nina C.
Chaman B.
Kathleen H.
Rebecca K.
Claire M.
Susan R.
Robyn O.
Lynne L.
Michelle H.
Sue W.
Ann G.
Sharon G.
Marcia D.
Marjorie B.
Tess H.D.
Annie P.
Amanda U.-K.
Cathy
Ron F.
Bobbi K.
Stephanie B.
Sue S.

BiWomen is published
bi-monthly, of course.

Editor:
Kathleen Hepburn

Calendar Editor:
Tess H. Davis

Typists:
Sue Schiefelbein (almost
single-handedly), Kathleen
Hepburn

Contributors:
Lani Kaahumanu, Kathleen
Hepburn, Laura Sachs,
Robyn Ochs, Loraine
Hutchins, Sharon Gonsalves,
Jennifer Rose, Janet Kyle,
Rebecca Gorlin, Amanda
Udis-Kessler

Dear BBWN Members,

The concept of having a co-ed bisexual network in Boston was recently discussed at a Boston Bisexual Men's Network general meeting. (Those BBWN members who receive BBMN News may have read the two articles pertaining to this issue.)

Subsequently, various members of both networks have discussed having a co-ed network and the following questions have been raised:

Q. Does this mean that BBMN and BBWN are merging?

A. No. BBWN will continue to exist as a separate space for bisexual women in Boston. BBMN may also continue to exist if sufficient active people are found. Alternatively, BBMN might wish to become a bi men's support group under the new network.

Q. Will members of the new network also be able to belong to BBWN or BBMN?

A. Yes. Membership in the new network will not preclude membership in any other bisexual organization.

Q. Will members of the new network be able to organize separate sex activities?

A. There should be no problem with this. Most mixed sex bisexual networks have some separate sex activities, support groups, etc.

Q. How will the new network be organized?

A. That will be decided in the organizational meetings which will be held during the formation period of the network. Whoever shows up and wants to be involved will help decide how the network is organized.

Q. Will women and men be equal partners in this network?

A. In the words of Drew Lewis, "If we are going to be anything but absolute

equals in this new network, we should forget the whole thing right now!"

Q. What will the new network be called?

A. That should also be decided during the organizational meetings.

Q. How will this affect BBWN?

A. There is strong support in the Boston bisexual community for a separate women's network. It is the oldest and strongest bi women's network in the world. We fully expect that strong tradition to continue. The purpose of forming the new network is to attract and energize bisexual people who do not feel comfortable with the current segregated networks but who might become more active in a mixed environment. Currently there is nothing available in Boston for these people.


[Many thanks to Wayne Bryant, editor of the Boston Bisexual Men's Network newsletter, for the above questions and answers, which appeared in the March issue.]

We wish to reiterate that BBWN will continue to do business as usual!! WE WANT FEEDBACK! Your thoughts and opinions are very important to us. Please write and let us know how you feel about the proposed new network. The address for responses is BBWN c/o GLSC 338 Newbury Street, Boston MA 02115.

At the closing session of Bi Fest '91 there will be an announcement as to where and when the meeting open to all will be held to discuss the potential co-ed bi network.

Be there or be hexagonal.

Love to all, Laura Sachs

 **DEADLINE** for the
Feb./March issue:
Friday, May 3 at noon.

All submissions in writing, and please include a name and phone number if possible. **If you do not want your name published, please tell us!** Otherwise we will assume that you do not mind being listed as a contributor.

Send articles, calendar entries, letters, art, news and views to:

BiWomen, BBWN
338 Newbury Street, 202C
Boston, MA 02115

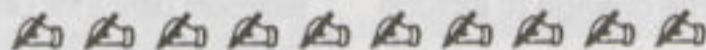
The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Letters

BiWomen,

It is a pleasure to read BiWomen and to see that there is such an organized, active bisexual women's community in Boston. A few of us in Madison, Wisconsin are just getting together as a group and have shared an issue of your newsletter among us. It's an inspiration! Thank you.

With kind regards,
Astrid Newenhouse



Dear Bi-Women,

Some of you may recognize my name as an old timer, some of you have probably never heard of me at all. I used to live in Cambridge (right upstairs from Robyn O. as a matter of fact). My phone number was the phone number for the network for a long time and I even used to be editor of the newsletter. I remember going to my first meeting at the Women's Center when either sixty or eighty women showed up. They announced they were having a trip to P-town the next weekend and I decided to go even though I didn't know any of them. That weekend I met Robyn, Charnan, Jean, Sylvia, Meghan and few other women. That started my involvement with the network. My first meeting is where I heard Betsy Rose sing for the first time. I even met a to-be lover at that first meeting. I got involved in co-sponsoring the first BBWN/BBMN weekend retreat at Another Place with Norman. That all seems so long ago now. I am not saying all this to blow my own horn, just some herstory for newer members.

Many women helped me through some really difficult times back then. Even still today although I stay in touch with fewer people. I was always broke (I am on disability) and never able to pay full membership. Fortunately life is going better for me now. I am back to work as a

nursing supervisor but I am living out in the boondocks on the New Hampshire border.

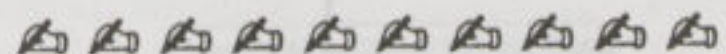
I find however as time has gone on, my life is constantly changing. I remember the day I came out to my parents as bi- and having to explain what that meant when I wasn't even sure myself at times. The network has helped me become a person. That night when I went to my first meeting I turned around and headed home three times. I was so scared to think I might be gay. The support I got from the women at BBWN and some men at BBMN is impossible to measure in words. I am babbling.

I said my life is changing. One change is I no longer identify myself as bisexual. I have joined a lesbian organization in Lowell, Mass. called "Shared Times". They have dances every three months and I have been a member of one of their support groups since September. The women that run the group are almost as wonderful as the women at BBWN. (Note I said almost!) Anyone can contact me at the address below for more info if you want although I have to tell you right now they are not too bi friendly.

In closing, I have one issue I would like to see addressed in future newsletters. I recently have developed a very strong friendship with a gay man who has HIV disease. He has become a great friend very quickly but I find myself kind of withdrawing a little for fear of losing him. I know this sounds selfish but it feels self-protective. Maybe we could get Bet or Cathy McDermott to speak a little bit on befriending someone with HIV.

I am pleased to be in the financial situation to be able to send a check. Although I am lesbian in practice, I will always be bi at heart. Please print my address so my old friends on the mailing list can write me in the boonies and let me know where they are. A special hello to Jean and Andrew in Australia.

Wishing for peace,
Betty Aubut
205 Sladen St.
2nd floor rear
Dracut, Ma. 01826



Hello,

'Twas lovely, as ever, to receive the latest BiWomen. The info about the Dr. Ruth column in the Feb./March issue was interesting, but not surprising to me in light of another recent Dr. Ruth incident. Sandra Bernhardt (a fave bi woman) was recently on Lifetime Television's "You're on the Air with Dr. Ruth." The entire interview focussed on what qualities Sandra liked in men (especially physical qualities). When Dr. Ruth asked about Sandra's most erotic experience, it was painful to listen as

Letters continued on next page

Send letters to:

BiWomen

BBWN

338 Newbury
Street, 202C

Boston, MA
02115



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Watching from Afar

Watching from afar...
Seeing HER
Drawn by HER stature
and movements...
She is agile like a cat
and tough like the
leatherstrap
She wears around her
wrist — habitually
like the bottle in her
hand.

Watching from afar...
Seeing HER
And...
The POWER she carries
within — unaware
She's got
Feeling HER, resenting
all beauty — out of
dread!

Watching from afar...
Seeing HER
Struggle with HER Self
While She lies bluntly
Out of fear being
known...
Afraid of HER own
Wildness — perhaps?
The Sadness and Pain
Bottled up inside
She Drowns!

Watching from afar...
Seeing HER
I approached!
...She purrs like a cat...
I've heard it — when
stroked!
Believe me, it's true.
...I loved HER best!

© MAX
January 1991

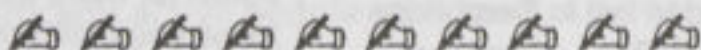
Letters, from previous page

Sandra said "this person" a dozen times in order to avoid using a gendered pronoun. One is led to wonder whether this was self-censorship or whether she had been told that lesbian experiences were off-limits for discussion on Dr. Ruth's show.

Oh well, just thought someone might be interested in that tidbit. The Champaign-Urbana Bisexual Network is growing. During the fall, we were just one support group. Now, we have two support groups, hold separate business meetings, and are planning educational and social events for the spring. Fun, fun, fun! The exciting news in these parts is that the Lesbian and Gay Illini of the University of Illinois are now considering a name change to include bisexuals. Wish us luck!

Happy Valentine's Day
to y'all.

M. Lynne Murphy



Dear BBWN,

I am pleased to tell you that we have started a new support group for Bisexual women in New York City. We are meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month from 6:30 - 8:00 pm at the Lesbian and Gay Center on 208 W. 13th street. We are part of the New York Area Bisexual Network. It has been 6 years since there has been a Bisexual group for women in New York.

Also, I want to ask if anyone is organizing a visible Bisexual contingent to attend the National Lesbian Conference in Kansas City this April; and / or the International Lesbian and Gay Conference in Guadalajara, Mexico this summer? I am very interested to know if any bi women are interested in going.

In Sisterhood,
Tamara Bower
213 Henry Street #8
New York City 10002



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CALENDAR, from page 12

May 14 ♦ Tuesday

Help Plan BiFest '91, 6-8pm at the Center. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

May 16 ♦ Thursday

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Speakers Bureau Meeting, see April 18.

May 17 ♦ Friday

Ballroom Dance for Lesbians/Gays/Bis/Friends, this month's lesson: Cha-cha. See April 26.

May 17-19 ♦ Friday-Sunday

Jole d' Art, an art exhibit directed at the Lesbian/Gay Community, focuses primarily on celebration of life and of life in the Arts. Info: Janet Kyle, Isis by Design, at (617) 262-7760.

May 18 ♦ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Bi Brunch, at the Greenhouse Coffeeshop in Harvard Square (across from the Newsstand). Meet outside at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Ars Nova, Boston's new Lesbian/Gay Chorus to give debut performance, 8pm at Paine Hall, Harvard University. \$10 and \$15 IN ADVANCE. Info: (617) 338-1355.

May 20 ♦ Monday

Help BBWN stuff the June/July newsletter! Funfunfun with lots of us helping and chatting! Get your name on the Honor Roll! 6-10pm at the Center. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

June 2 ♦ Sunday

Bi Space, see April 7.

June 3 ♦ Monday

BBWN Intro Meeting, see April 1.

Help Plan BiFest '91, 6-8pm at the Center. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

June 7 ♦ Friday


Swingtime Boston Lesbian/Gay/Bi Swing & Ballroom Dance, see April 5.

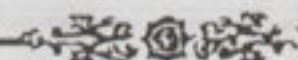
Coming up!

June 7-9 ♦ Friday-Sunday

BiFest '91!!!!

June 30-July 6 ♦ Sunday-Saturday

International Lesbian and Gay Association 13th Annual Conference in Guadalajara, Mexico. Be a visible and vocal Bi! Info: 52+(36)+37 26 90. 



“Darling, you’re divine. I’ve had an affair with your husband. You’ll be next.”

—Tallulah Bankhead, to Joan Crawford, married at the time to Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.



New Market Survey Group for the “Lesbian and Gay Community”

A new market survey group has formed that aims to show the commercial sector just how important the gay community is. In its literature, it states, “The lesbian, gay and bisexual community represents a large portion of the social mainstream, and an even larger portion of this country’s (sic) buying power.” It maintains that to counter our invisibility and history of being ignored as a potential market force, we must “begin to effectively and consistently communicate our wishes to both the public and private sectors.” To achieve this end, Overlooked Opinions is seeking gay men, lesbians and bisexual people to join their “panel” by filling out periodic opinion surveys.

The graph below represents the sexual self-identification of the first 1,000 respondents, of whom 72.5 percent were men. As you can see, their sample could probably use a lot more female voices and a lot more bisexual voices in order to become more truly representative of our communities. If you want to become one of these voices, write to Overlooked Opinions, Inc., 3712 N. Broadway, Suite 277, Chicago IL 60613 or call them at (312) 792-7800.

And speaking of surveys — the data for our own 1989-90 survey of bisexual women has finally been coded and entered into the computer. The results will be presented in the next couple of issues of the newsletter (see story on page 1). And bi the way, more than 250 women responded.

— Robyn Ochs

1,000 & Counting

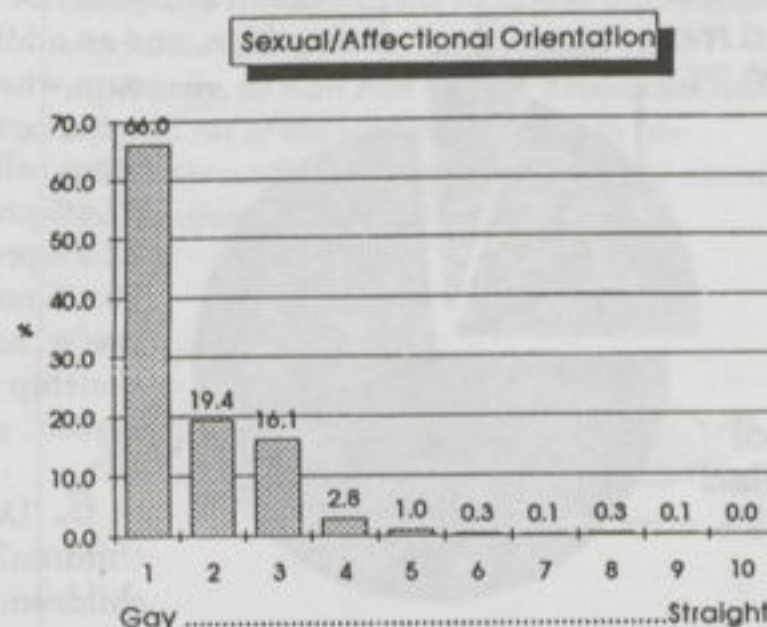
The present sample represents the first 1,000 panel members. This is the breakout between the sexes.

Females 27.5%*

Males 72.5%

I Am What I Am

On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is completely gay or lesbian and 10 is completely straight, most of the men reported a rating of 1 or 2 (just under 90%). Women were much more likely to report self ratings of 3 or 4 (21% compared to 9.9% for the men).



Volume 10
Number 2
February 1990

off our backs

\$2 a women's newsjournal

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS with OOB

20 YEARS
against
RACISM

20 YEARS
FOR
WOMEN-
CONTROLLED
HEALTHCARE

20 YEARS
FOR
REPRODUCTIVE
RIGHTS

20 YEARS
AGAINST
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN

20 YEARS
against
HETERO-
PATRIARCHY

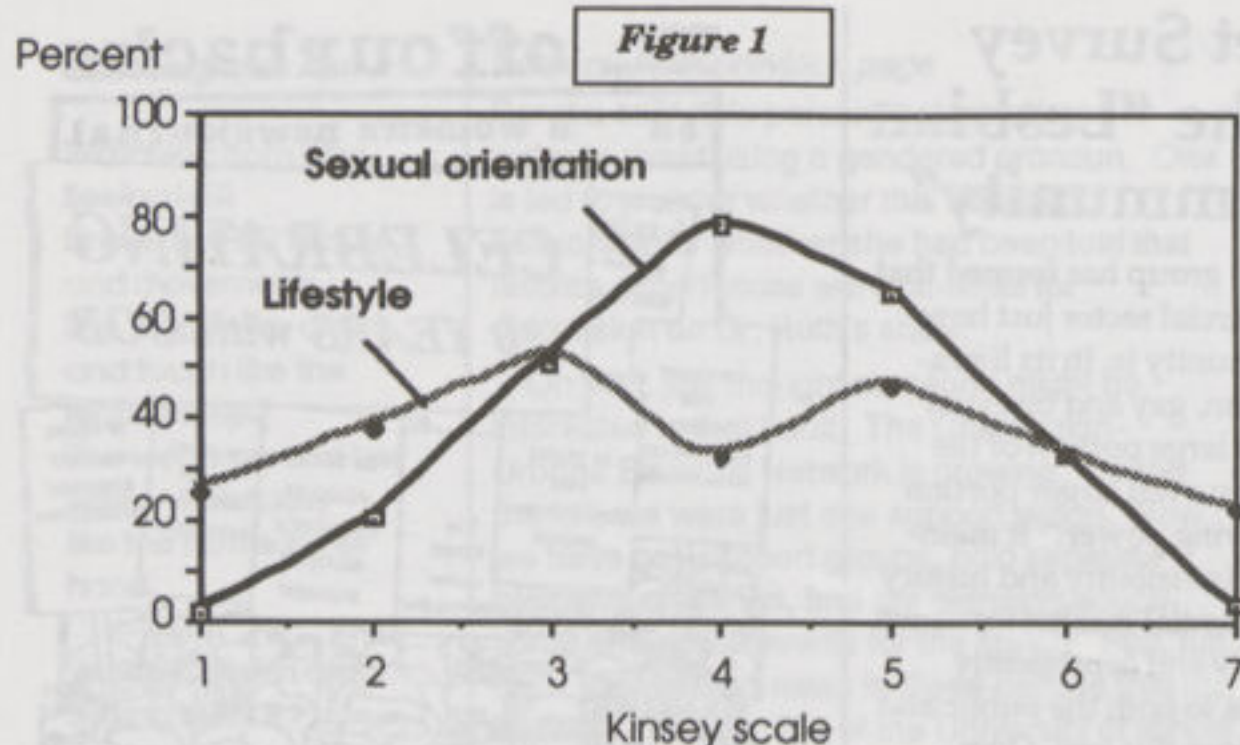
20 YEARS
AGAINST
ECONOMIC
EXPLOITATION

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BiWomen Survey, from page 1

question reveals a bell curve response, the lifestyle question reveals a relatively level response, with women spread throughout the spectrum. See Figure 1.

3. Of the respondents, 26.6% consider themselves lesbian, 57.5% do not, and 15.9% are unsure. Only 4.7% consider themselves "straight," 89.4% do not, and 5.9% are unsure. Many people who responded "no" to both questions, wrote in "because I'm bisexual."

4. People were asked what sequence of identities they went through. [Lesbian, then bisexual] = 1.2%; [Heterosexual, then bisexual] = 40.2%; [Heterosexual, then lesbian, then bisexual] = 23.6%; [Heterosexual, then bisexual, then lesbian] = 6.7%; [Always bisexual] = 12.2%; [Heterosexual, bisexual, lesbian, bisexual] = 10.6%; [Other] = 1.2%

5. 21.3% are currently in monogamous relationships with men. 11.9% are in monogamous relationships with women. An additional 19.2% would like to be in a monogamous relationship. 4% are in "monogamous" (closed) relationships with a man and a woman. 22.5% do not want monogamous relationships, and an additional 20.4% are not sure whether they want to be in a monogamous or nonmonogamous relationship. So that's 52.4% preferring monogamy, 22.5% preferring nonmonogamy, 20.4% not sure which they prefer, and 5% in a closed relationship with more than one person.

6. Do we want to have children? 16.9% already have children. 20.4% of the others

would like to; 15.3% probably want to; 16.9% probably do not; 21.2% do not want children; and 9.4% are unsure.

7. 44.7% of us are active gay/lesbian organizations. 69.8% of us have participated in a gay pride march, 61.5% of us have attended a women's music concert; 45.9% have gone to a women's music festival. 25% of us went to the gay/lesbian march on Washington (D.C.). Half of us have been to a gay rights rally. 34.5% have participated in a lesbian support group. 40% have been to a gay/lesbian fundraiser. 57.3% have been to a meeting of a gay/lesbian group. 65% have been in a bisexual support group.

8. 4% of us are not comfortable with our bisexuality. 2% are a little bit comfortable. 15.6% are somewhat comfortable. 36% are mostly comfortable, and 42.4% are comfortable.

9. Most of us prefer the company of women, or have no gender preference as far as socializing is concerned. For sex, 11.4% prefer men as partners, 38.6% prefer women, and 50% have no preference.

10. Only 14.5% of us have volunteered for BBWN in the past two years. Of those who have not volunteered, most say it is because they live too far away. 10% report being shy, 13.7% too busy, and 2.3% do not attend because of child care.

11. About 70% say that the AIDS epidemic has affected their sexual behavior.

12. 52.4% report experiencing discrimination as a result of their sexual orientation. 24.2% have not, and 23.4% are not sure.

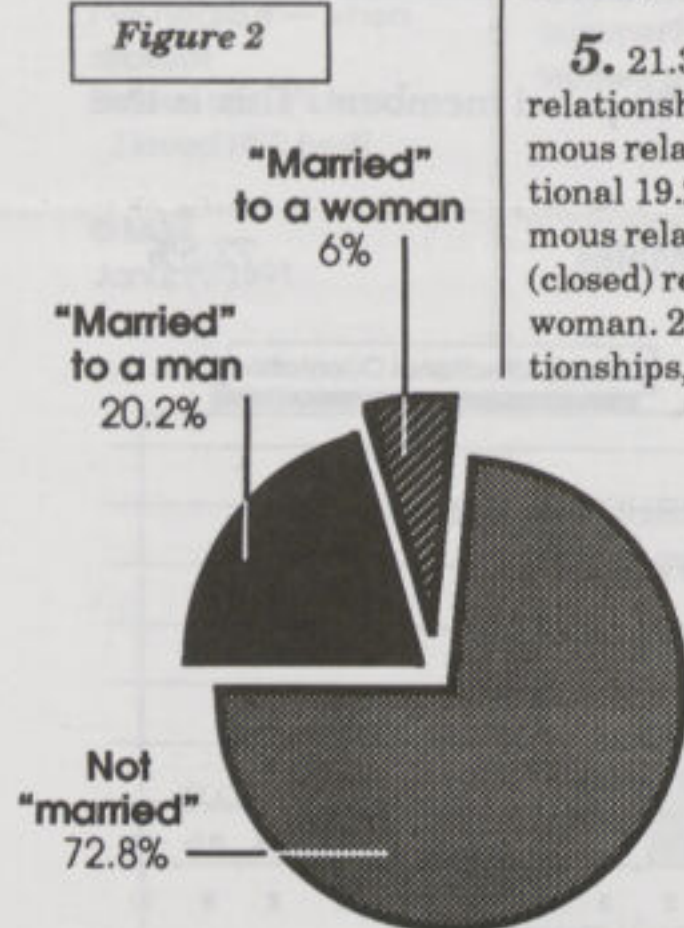
13. Respondents range in age from 18-56, with the largest group being 30-34, the second largest group 26-29, and the third largest group 35-39.

14. 107 respondents come from Massachusetts, with 19 from Washington State, 17 from New York, 13 from California. A total of 28 states are represented, with half of the total respondents in New England. 22 are from outside the U.S. (Canada, U.K., New Zealand and Australia).

15. 65.5% live in urban areas, 11.1% suburban, and 23.4% rural.

16. 20.2% of us are "married" to a man, 6% to a woman, and 72.8% of us are not "married." See Figure 2.

BiWomen Survey continued on next page



Martina Praised in Parade Magazine



The following appeared last summer in the nationally-distributed Parade Magazine, an insert to the Boston Sunday Globe.

The Commonwealth of Australia is a federal parliamentary state that guarantees all its citizens all the basic democratic rights. Since Margaret Court – three times a Wimbledon singles champion and winner of 26 Grand Slam tennis titles – is by birth an Australian citizen, she is entitled to freedom of speech and within the libel laws can say anything she likes.

Why, however, did Court, a born-again Christian and mother of four, find it necessary to criticize Martina Navratolova, who won a record ninth singles title at Wimbledon in July, because Navratolova is admittedly bisexual? What compelled her to say in a series of newspaper and radio interviews that Navratolova – one of the most honorable, courteous, generous, well-behaved woman athletes – served as a poor role model for young tennis players?

"She is a great player", Court conceded, "but I'd like to see somebody at the top whom the young players can look up to. It is very sad for children to be exposed to it [homosexuality]."

It may well be that Margaret Court, at 48, is not particularly knowledgeable of homosexuality, that she knows far less about it than Navratolova, who is an intelligent, literate and tolerant young woman endowed with a basic honesty and a quick sense of humor.

In any case, Navratolova is not about to take Margaret Court on in an argument or to rebut any of her comments. If the tall Australian from Perth wants to learn anything about Navratolova – anything from her personal life to her professional life – all she need do is read *Martina*, the autobiography Navratolova penned with George Vecsey. It's a remarkably revealing book about a girl born in Czechoslovakia who developed into a superb athlete, fell in love with America, pridefully became a U.S. citizen and at 33 is still not finished earning fame, fortune and friendship.

From the August 26, 1990, Parade Magazine's Special *Intelligence Report*, © 1990 by Lloyd Shearer. ▽

“It's ridiculous for a woman to say that she's not attracted to other women. That's completely false...”

—Grace Jones

BiWomen Survey, from previous page

17. 92% of us are registered to vote, with almost 2/3 registered as Democrats.

18. On our family's religion, 18.8% were Jewish, 25.6% Catholic, 33.6% Protestant; 3.2% Unitarian, 1.6% Quaker, 0.8% Agnostic, 6% a mixture; 0.4% other, including "spiritual," and 10% no religion. Our present religious identification is 8.2% Jewish, 1.6% Catholic, 4.7% Protestant, 15% Pagan/Wicca, 2.8% Unitarian, 1.2% Quaker, 5.1% Agnostic, 11.1% a mixture, 32.4% Atheist, and 11.1% a mixture.

19. We are an educated group. 0.8% have some high school education. 0.8% have a high school degree, 0.8% a trade school degree. 15.7% have some college, 30.7% have a college degree. 16.1% have completed some graduate study. 28.7% have a college/professional degree, and 6.3% have a doctorate.

20. As a group, we are 89.3% white, 4.3% Black, 0.8% Hispanic, 0.8% Native American, 0.4% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 4.3% "other."

21. Our politics do not describe a bell curve at all. 19.8% describe ourselves as "radical," 33.2% as "somewhat radical" 24.7% as "very liberal," 14.6% as "liberal," 6.1% as "somewhat liberal," and 1.6% as "somewhat conservative."

22. 89.3% consider ourselves feminists. 3.6% do not, and 7.1% are unsure.

The next issue of BiWomen will contain a follow-up article with data analysis. Don't forget to call (617) BIS-MOVE if you have any specific questions you'd like to see analyzed.

Acknowledgements: Thanks to Heidi Friedman who helped design the coding form, to Chris McLaughlin who helped with the coding, to Cathy B. who donated an afternoon of her life to helping me organize and photocopy the coding form. And, finally and especially, to Ron Fox in San Francisco, who entered all of this information into his computer and is currently helping me decide how to analyze it. ▽





Writings by Women Wanted for New Anthology

My Lover in the Mirror: Stories Celebrating Women Making Love to Themselves

This very personal collection of stories is aimed at bringing women's masturbation out of the closet and onto the page. Masturbation by women is not something that has been easily discussed much less celebrated. This anthology is to be a creative display of this very important aspect of women's sexuality; a proclamation of "Yes, we 'do it' and we like it."

Erotic, autobiographical, humorous, poignant, political, joyful, healing stories of all shapes, sizes and types should be sent no later than **April 15, 1991** to:

Jennifer Carlin
554 Hawthorne St
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope and short biography. Pieces will not be returned, so please don't send originals. Writers retain all copyrights. Multiple submissions and previously published works will be considered.

Works by new writers, women of color and differently-abled women are especially encouraged.

New Study to Be Published

While much attention has been paid to the attitudes of majority and minority group members toward each other, few studies have focussed on interpersonal attitudes across the less visible divisions which occur within minorities.

When Does the Unity of a "Common Oppression" Break Down? Reciprocal attitudes between lesbian and bisexual women is a 447-page Ph.D. dissertation by Claire Rust. It will be revised for publication in the relatively near future (1991, perhaps), reports Rust.

The study explores the attitudes of lesbian and bisexual women toward each other as an example of intergroup intraminority relations.

Softcover copies of the current book are available now from University Microfilms International for approx. \$33.50 plus state sales tax, but can be ordered directly the author for the same price, "more if you can, less if you can't since this is my actual cost to produce the copies," she says. After publication she will no longer be able to sell the book

on a sliding scale basis; the publisher will take over sales. Write to her at: **Dr. Paula Rust, Department of Sociology, Hamilton College, Clinton NY 13323.**

More Bisexual Lives

UNITED KINGDOM — The sequel book to the successful *Bisexual Lives* (published in U.K. 1988 by Off Pink Publishing Collective) is progressing with new perspectives from people in the U.S.A., Japan, and Britain, according to a "newsheet" from OPPC. However, they still need a much wider range of material to achieve a cross cultural international book about issues of oppression, gender, relationships, roots of sexuality, personal and creative stories, etc. from bisexual people and their partners, children and friends. Taped interviews can be arranged. Send your writing (poems and drawings), in outline or in full, as soon as possible. Their next group meeting will be in May. **Contacts: Guy Chapman, 13 Fairlawn, Bristol BS6 5JR, U.K. tel. 0272 422 847; Zadie Parr, 49a Adolphus Rd., London N4 2AX, U.K. tel. 081 802 9264.**



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To Whom it May Concern:

Create Change!

BBWN received a copy of a letter sent by Lani Kaahumanu, co-editor (with Loraine Hutchins) of the newly published *Bi Any Other Name* (see CALENDAR, April 20). She wrote as a member of BiPOL, San Francisco's bisexual, lesbian and gay political action group, congratulating Urvashi Vaid, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, on the success of the third annual "Creating Change" conference held in Minneapolis-St. Paul this past fall. The conference included a panel on "Bisexuality in the Gay and Lesbian Movement."

In her letter Kaahumanu writes:

The presentation of the bisexual panel was an important step in breaking down the stereotypes and challenging the myths surrounding bisexuality. However, it is still only the beginning of an ongoing dialogue that must take place. The struggle for gay rights and challenging heterosexism is our struggle. We have been part of the gay rights movement since Stonewall, when gay was an umbrella term for the entire sexual minority community. The acknowledgement and acceptance of bisexuals is crucial to the growth of the gay rights movement especially in the right wing conservative times in which we live.

She urges other groups to send letters. "It's time to make some noise about inclusion - not tokenism," she says.

Send letters to:

Urvashi Vaid, Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 1517 U Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20009

than such labels would allow. But in any culture where the concept of manhood has been tied to heterosexuality, men find it difficult if not often impossible to admit to any "deviation." Therefore it should come as no surprise that current AIDS research indicates that bisexuality is far more widespread than had been previously thought. Unfortunately, those men who refuse to acknowledge their homosexual encounters, particularly those in Western countries where the incidence of infection among homosexual men is high, may place women at risk. So much of the male behavior that puts women at risk—multiple partners, bisexuality, reluctance or refusal to wear condoms—cannot be changed by women alone. ... of the attitudes that name...

LG(B) Studies

In the last issue of BiWomen we encouraged you to send letters to organizers of the 1991 Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference, to be held at Rutgers University. The word "Bisexual" has been dropped from the title since the 1990 Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Studies Conference at Harvard this past year.

The following is excerpted from a letter sent to conference organizers by Mary McGhee of the University of California, Santa Barbara:

Would you mind explaining the rationale for [your choice to drop the word "bisexual" from the conference title]? Does it signify a decision to omit content dealing with bisexuality from the conference studies altogether because it is somehow unrelated or irrelevant to lesbian and gay studies? Or does it come from the assumption that these issues are wholly contained within and addressed by programs on lesbian and gay issues? This is what your title suggests to me, as I'm sure it will to many other people.

If this is your reasoning, I urge you to reconsider this decision. As people outside the dominant heterosexual mainstream of American society, bisexual individuals have many issues, needs and concerns in common with lesbian and gay men. We also have our own which are unique and must be addressed separately. Human sexuality is too complex to be viewed as a simple, polarized duality. A conference attempting to deal with the breadth of experience of gay and lesbian people needs to recognize bisexuality as part of this experience, yet distinct from it. The message in the title of the 1990 conference was that it intended to do this; yours fails to deliver the same message.

Send your own letters to:

Lesbian and Gay Studies #5, CCACC, Rutgers, The State of New Jersey, 8 Bishop Place, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903

— Kathleen Hepburn

Biphobia Alert!

The new issue of the new Ms. (Vol. 1 No. 4) has a special on AIDS and Women which is excellent but which leads off with another "Blame the Bi" attitude [see clipping], which must be corrected. It would be great if Ms. started getting letters to the editor from Long Beach, Seattle, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, D.C., etc., all responding to this. . . Please dash off a response today!

— Loraine Hutchins,
Co-editor, *Bi Any Other Name*

Send letters to:

Letters to the Editor, Ms., One Times Square, New York, NY 10036. Include name, address, and daytime phone number.

The 1990 National Bisexual Conference

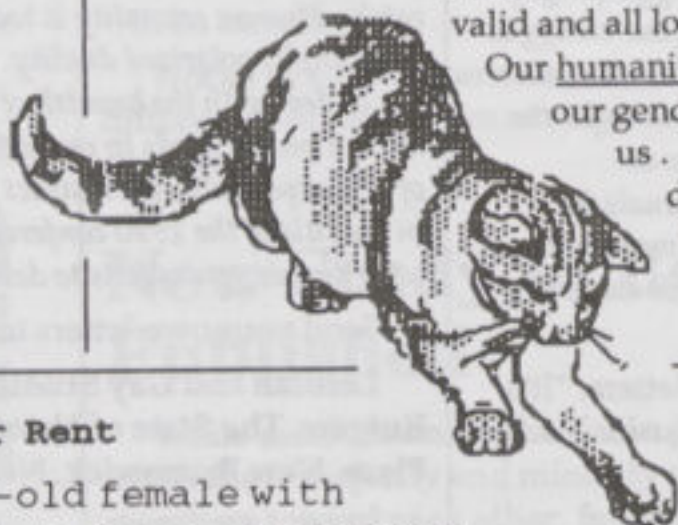
A report on the San Francisco conference

by Ingrid Sell

Continued from the February/March issue of BiWomen.

Returning to the original feminist tenet that the "personal is political", one of the new Bisexual movement's intentions is to return the basic right of people to define themselves. "We're creating a space of safety for all people to be able to choose the label that fits" said Brenda Blasingame, a Jewish, African-American activist from Berkeley about the movement. Added Beth Reba Weise, a bisexual activist from Seattle, "We don't want one more ghetto - The Bisexual Community - " but rather, to "be welcomed, actively, not merely tolerated by the gay community" that so many Bisexuals have helped to build.

She continued, "All love is valid and all love is good. Our humanity and not our gender define us We demand that we



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can be all things simultaneously. Our openness forces others to acknowledge that they're really no different than we are."

Many presenters at the conference noted that bisexual behavior is an integral and accepted part of many non-white-European cultures, citing examples from India and Thailand to Africa.

"People who attack bisexuality also tend to be those who reify monolithic models of race" noted Leonard Tirado, from Albany, in a workshop on "Remembering/Maintaining our Diversity".

Claire Thompson, Chair of the London (England) Bisexual Group's Management Committee, said "Who we relate to...can contribute to eliminating sexism, racism, etc...we deserve the full range [of choices]. Real freedom of choice has to be the full range [also for] lesbian, gay and straight people, [who] deserve the full range of choices too - they don't have to be bi to choose."

While at the opening of the conference, organizer Autumn Courtney of BiPol challenged attendees to push themselves regarding getting to know and accept those who are different, at the closing assembly, Gary Linden, of Minneapolis noted that there was a "unity forged within an incredibly diverse community." Or, as Tom Mossmiller put it in a panel on "Feminism and Bisexuality", the conference helped to build "unity across divisions of men and women and race, rather than unity within one segment of the community."

This conference was only the beginning of a movement whose time has come. As the Lesbian and Gay Movement matures into an acceptance of diversity within its ranks, and it becomes increasingly clear on a global level that as humans, we cannot afford to remain divided along artificial boundaries, the Bisexual Movement will be at the forefront of bridging the gaps between different cultures. After all, an army of lovers cannot fail. ▼

Advertise in BiWomen!

For only \$10 per issue, your message will reach over 700 subscribers. Save \$5 and advertise in three issues for \$25.

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338 Newbury Street, 202C
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Such a deal!

etcetera

Get ready for the Bi Festival during Pride Weekend!

Mark your calendar now!

Bi-Fest '91 is being planned for the first weekend in June to coincide with the Pride March in Boston. Events include a reception and video night on Friday, our traditional pre-pride brunch on Saturday morning, a dance (alcohol free) on Saturday night and a couple of workshop sessions on Sunday late morning / early afternoon.

HELP MAKE IT A SUCCESS!

Anyone interested in helping to plan these events is encouraged to **get involved** by calling (617) BIS-MOVE. The initial work has been done. We have locations secured for most of the events. We will definitely need people to work at these events and do some organizing before hand (publicity, workshop topics and facilitators, etc.). The next organizing meeting will be April 28, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center.

Out-of-Towners:

Write to ECBN Housing Goddesses, c/o LGCC, 338 Newbury Street, Suite 202C, Boston, MA 02115

We also expect that some people will be coming in from out of town to enjoy the weekend with us and could use our help finding a place to stay. **If you have room in your home** or would like to help out please let us know by calling (617) BIS-MOVE.

Out of Touch, from page 1

change these ignorant, stereotypical attitudes. Predictably, the February 20 issue contains a fair number of letters, ranging from "If lesbians and gays are not willing to accept others because of dual gender preference, we are hypocritical caricatures of ourselves . . ." to "Bisexuals are *not* gay. Bisexuals are *not* lesbian. Why are they taking up space in *our* magazine?"

Visit the BBWN office at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center in Boston and read a copy of the article, as well as the responses. *OutWeek* needs to hear from us, and needs our input in order to understand us. As Tamara Bower of New York City writes in the Feb. 20 issue of *OutWeek*, "I have a strong feeling that [the author] really doesn't understand us. I would rather have seen *OutWeek* publish something written by bisexuals themselves."

— Kathleen H. ▽

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☐ Goddess: \$50
☐ Matron Saint (WOW!): \$100

Send this form along with your check to:

BBWN

338 Newbury Street, 202C
Boston, MA 02115

No Experience Necessary . . .

Volunteers are needed to staff the BBWN office at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Monday evenings. Can you spare one Monday a month? To volunteer, call (617) BIS-MOVE and leave a message for Stephanie. Training will be provided. Thanks. ▽



SPECIAL
PRIDE
ISSUE

June/July 1991

Vol. 9 No. 3

Bi Women

The Newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network

NAMBN Becomes a Reality

The following letter is from the newly-formed
North American Multicultural Bisexual Network



Hello —

In the course of planning a national bisexual contingent for the October, 1987, March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, four bisexual women initiated the first steps towards organizing a national bisexual network. Since then, many bisexual women and

men have been in the process of forming a bisexual network that could connect and make known the unique and challenging concerns of bisexuals throughout North America. One of the main efforts of those who attended the 1990 National Bisexual Conference in San Francisco last June was to lay the groundwork for the actual formation of this network. Many people were involved in discussing and setting out the goals, operating, and organizing guidelines of our network. After three days of deliberation, the following was agreed upon:

a) A name!

The North American Multicultural Bisexual Network (NAMBN), which will be used for one year, then discussed at our next meeting.

b) Network members could be one or more of the following:

1) members of a core work group

This group will coordinate the general meetings, help to assemble the newsletter,

NAMBN continued on page 10

Lesbian and Gay [and Bisexual] Pride March

Northampton, Mass., May 4, 1991

by Robyn Ochs

This year's Northampton Lesbian and Gay [and Bisexual] Pride March was my third. During my first march, in 1988, I joined up with a contingent of 30 bisexuals to march under a bisexual banner. That year's march was officially entitled the Lesbian and Gay Pride March. The next year, the official title of the march had been changed to include the word *bisexual*, and I felt considerably more welcome. As most of you know, there was considerable community backlash to the inclusion of the "b-word." Community meetings ensued with hot, heavy and impassioned debates. Forty lesbians showed up at the meeting at which the name of the march was to be decided, the "b-word" was voted back out of the title, and bisexuals were explicitly prohibited from being on the march steering committee, but told they were welcome, like heterosexuals, to march as *allies*. (At least one bisexual woman had served on the march committee during past years.) I did not attend the 1990 march, but apparently a few groups and some individuals boycotted the march, and others wore bisexual pride buttons in solidarity, or added "bisexual" to their banners.

This past fall, a group of four lesbians formed a Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee, and obtained a permit to march. According to Beth Grace, a Northampton resident who self-identifies as a lesbian, a number of other people tried to get involved in the original committee to have input into policy decisions, but felt that the committee was inaccessible. (In fact, according to Beth Grace, on April 4 at the first meeting open to the community, they would not listen to the programmatic

Northampton continued on page 7

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BBWN News

Honor Roll

Annie P.
Stephanie B.
Kathleen H.
Susan S.
Robyn O.
Laura S.
Lucy F.
Sue P.
Liz N.
Gail Z.
Marcia D.
Michelle H.
Claire M.
Sharon G.
Rebecca G.
Amanda U.-K.
Charnan B.
Rebecca S.
Ann G.

There were many more women who gave their time and energy to BBWN and deserve Honor Roll recognition, but whose names have been lost in the melee of late-breaking news and BiWomen production deadlines. Many, many thanks to everyone.

BiWomen is published bi-monthly, of course.

Editors:

Kathleen Hepburn
Susan Schiefelbein

Typist:

Susan Schiefelbein

Calendar Editors:

Laura Sachs, Tess H. Davis

Contributors:

Lani Kaahumanu, Kathleen Hepburn, Stephanie Berger, Barbara Stratton, Tamara Bower, Laura Sachs, Robyn Ochs, Loraine Hutchins, Marcia Deihl, Janet Kyle, Amanda Udis-Kessler, and many more.

Bi Fest '91 Has Arrived!

After months of preparation and planning, **Bi Fest '91** is finally here!

Beginning with an "Opening Schmooze" on Friday, June 7 (5:00 p.m. to midnight at MIT Room 14E-310), Bi Fest continues through Boston's Pride Weekend with a host of events for bisexual folks and their friends. A short Film Festival will be held on the Friday evening, from 7:00 p.m. to midnight, for those who want to see bi's on the Silver Screen.

On Saturday morning (bright and early!), join new friends and old for breakfast (What, not a *Brunch*??) at the Community Church of Boston, 565 Boylston Street in Copley Square. The cost is a paltry \$5, well worth the food and company.

The Boston Gay Pride March kicks off at noon from City Hall Plaza, immediately after a morning of Pride Festivities at the Plaza.

Save some energy, because there's a Pride Dance on Saturday evening, beginning at 9:00 p.m., at Walker Memorial on the MIT campus, 142 Memorial Drive in Cambridge.

Sunday morning, if you've got anything left in you, join lots of bi folks for Bagel Madness, an annual tradition of munching and brunching bagels and hot beverages. It's from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon, also at Walker Memorial. Sunday is filled with workshops led by bi activists from the Boston area and beyond.

If this issue of BiWomen doesn't include a Bi Fest '91 information flyer, call the BBWN office at The Center (617/BIS-MOVE, or 617/266-6683). ▼

No Experience Necessary . . .

Volunteers are needed to staff the BBWN office at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Monday evenings. Can you spare one Monday a month? To volunteer, call (617) BIS-MOVE and leave a message for Stephanie. Training will be provided. Thanks.

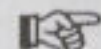
Open Forum to Be Held

In the last issue of BiWomen, we said that there will be a bi community meeting, open to all, held to discuss the possibility of a co-ed bi network. Well, the meeting will be held on June 18 from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. in Room 203 at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Boston.

This meeting is intended to be an open forum in which the bi community can discuss the potential for creating a co-ed bi community network. Let's share ideas; all voices and opinions will be heard.

If there is sufficient interest, a second meeting will be held on July 16, also from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. in Room 203 at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Boston.

Whether or not a new co-ed network is formed, the Boston Bisexual Women's Network will continue to exist as a separate space for bisexual women in Boston.



DEADLINE for the August/September issue:
Friday, July 12 at noon.

All submissions in writing, and please include a name and phone number if possible. If you do not want your name published, please tell us! Otherwise we will assume that you do not mind being listed as a contributor.

Send articles, calendar entries, letters, art, news and views to:

BiWomen, BBWN
338 Newbury Street, 202C
Boston, MA 02115

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Letters

Dear BBWN:

In the Jan-Feb

edition of *On Our Backs*, I ran across the following paragraph which includes recognition of the Bi's as the second largest contingent in San Francisco's Parade as well as making

it clear that there is more to bisexuality than wife-swapping, etc.

The paragraph read as follows:

(Excerpt from *Toys for Us*, beginning on page 11 — Susie Sexpert — and continuing on page 42.)

Last but not least, I got asked a lot about the trials and tribulations of sexual identity, which was commonly put to me as a bisexuality question. Bisexuality as a "label" has come a long way since the days of hippie lifestyles or swinger or swap-a-thon mentalities. Frankly, being bi these days is very gay. The bi contingent in this year's San Francisco Gay Freedom parade was second only in size to the Living Sober crowd. The typical outspoken bisexual these days is not an inexperienced woman who entertains a lesbian fantasy or two, but rather one who looks like a dyke, has had significant relationships with men and women, and who identifies with gay culture and political agendas. You know — like Madonna, if she were out of the closet.

I've never believed in the sanctity of "gay" and "straight" monikers, but we use them as shorthand all the time to communicate our desire and point of view. "Sexual preference" is actually a very open-minded concept — a preference is not exclusive or binding. Sex educators take a broad-minded view of bisexuality and I think I've come to understand that "bisexual" questions often mask other concerns a woman may have about her sexual relationships.

One young student, Jan, told me the story of her affair with a dyke, who she told her right off the bat, "I'm bisexual, can you accept that?" The new lover gave Jan positive feedback, but Jan asked her over and over again for reassurance. Finally, six weeks into the lesbian affair, Jan goes out with a man and beds him. Off she goes to her female lover, who "threw a shit fit and told me to get out." "It's not fair," Jan said. "She said she could handle my bisexuality but she really couldn't."

I don't think this story has much to do with bisexuality at all. If I started a love affair with a woman and I wanted her all to myself, it would threaten me to have her imply that she wanted to fuck other people, men or women. When Jan tested her new lover by putting out her

bisexuality, she was side-stepping her real position. Jan was not interested in settling down; she wanted to date other people. Her lover may well be accepting of bisexual feelings — but she wanted a monogamous relationship with Jan.

Playing games with bisexual rhetoric, pro or con, can be an easy substitute to avoid talking about jealousy or one's deepest wishes for a relationship. It's not so easy to be self-righteous or politically correct when you confide to your lover what you honestly want between the two of you — and acceptance for your sexual orientation is only one part of it.

That's all she said on bisexuality — and it was mostly positive. I feel we should all write to Susie at *On Our Backs* and give her a big THANK YOU!!! Hopefully she reached a large percentage of the lesbian (as well as gay) community — those who oppose us individually as bisexuals because of past stereotypes. However, I don't think I look like a dyke, although I do have several items on my political plate at the moment.

So gals, do what you will with the information from this article. It is nice to know the size of the bi contingent was noticed. Hopefully we will be the biggest contingent in Dallas' parade in 1992 — or have you heard, we're volunteering to host the 1992 National Bisexual Conference. We will need support from other groups in the way of workshop leaders/performers/speakers, etc.

Let us know what you think and pass it on...

Personally, I miss you all a great deal but everywhere I turn lately I see inclusion of bisexuals. I went to the bookstore the other day and I was leafing through the bulletins/brochures, etc. and picked up a flyer that said Lesbians/Bisexuals/Gay Men tell the editors of the Dallas Morning News what you think — are they fair to us, to our issues?

I hope to attend the forum, but just seeing the name included was WOW. I also posted our network information on the bulletin board and have a new line of greeting cards (newness artwork in addition to work, school, network, church, etc.) which I showed to someone at work who suggested I market them to the bookstores around town. I decided to start in the gay community, my friend Kaye (actually I just know her from the bookstore) bought 36 cards to display on a consignment basis and I'm considering getting a space in a Craft Mall where I pay a monthly fee and keep all my profits. Business cards will be coming your way soon. Perhaps I can do something on the BiSide. We're pretty sure our upcoming T-shirt and button slogan will be BiChoice. How do you like it? What's the news in Boston — how's the BiClimate? Better? Worse? Well anyway, I hope to be there in June for the weekend; right now

Letters continued on next page

Send letters to:

BiWomen

BBWN

338 Newbury
Street, 202C

Boston, MA

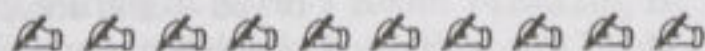
02115



Letters, from previous page

I'm working on airfare reduction and I'll play it by ear. So much for now. Hello to everyone — Laura/Robyn/Lucy — Where are you these days? Liz/Liz N./Amanda U. and Woody/Wayne/Alan/Pepper and everyone else. I miss all you guys/gals so much. Please write if you have a chance. P.O. Box 117574, Carrollton, TX 75011-7574.

Bi Love,
Sharla Clos



1st International Bisexual Conference
Postbus 1406, 1000 BK Amsterdam, Holland
Telephone: (31-20)-627 7445
Fax: (31-20)-548 7502

Hi!

Good news! The 1st International Bisexual Conference will take place in Amsterdam, Holland on October 4 and 5, 1991, at the Vrije University. I am writing you this first letter to make sure that you get this information out to your members, friends and colleagues as well as getting it in the appropriate bisexual newsletters. In this way all those interested in joining us at this first international gathering can make timely travel arrangements.

Last year I attended the 1st National American Bisexual Conference in San Francisco as well as the 8th National British one in Edinburgh. Not only were they most informative, they were highly enjoyable. I'm sure that this coming one in Amsterdam will be both educational and exciting as all 11 Bisexual Dutch organizations are helping make sure that it will be highly successful.

Let me know by letter, fax, or phone if you or anyone in your organization are interested in giving a talk or workshop at the conference so that we can put you on the program. Details as to costs (we expect them to be quite reasonable), exact times, place, and registration forms will be sent out later this spring. Also, let me know right away how many copies of the registration form you wish to distribute and I'll make sure they are sent to you.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the above address or fax and phone numbers.

Hope to see you this fall.

Cordially yours,

Fritz Klein, M.D.
Foreign Committee Chairman
1st B.C. Coordination Group



CALENDAR, from page 16

July 18 ♦ Thursday

Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Speakers Bureau Meeting, 8-10pm. See June 20.

July 20 ♦ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Bi Brunch. At the Rasmus Cafe, 175 Massachusetts Ave., Boston. Across from the Christian Science Center. Meet outside at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

July 26 ♦ Friday

Ballroom Dance for Lesbians/Gays/Bisexuals/Friends, free slow-dancing lesson 8-8:30pm; dance 8:30-11:30pm at the First Universalist Church in Providence, Rhode Island. Smoke- and alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. Info: (617) 859-9455.

July 29 ♦ Monday

Help stuff the August/September Issue of BiWomen! See old friends, make new friends. It's truly a lot of fun, especially when there are lots of stuffers. Plus, you get to read BiWomen hot off the press! 6-10pm at The Center. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Coming Up!!

August 13-18 ♦ Tuesday-Sunday

Michigan Womyn's Music Fest! Come one day or all! Over 40 performances; 125 Craft Booths; 300 workshops! For registration/info: WWTMC, Box 22, Walhalla, MI 49458 (Send a large self-addressed envelope) or call (616) 757-4766.

September 15 ♦ Monday

BBWN Coordinating Committee Meeting, 8 - 10pm. All women welcome. Help guide the network, share the load. Info: (617) BIS - MOVE.

Advertise in BiWomen!

For only \$10 per issue, your message will reach over 700 subscribers. Save \$5 and advertise in three issues for \$25.

Send your business-card sized ad and a check to:

BiWomen, c/o BBWN
338 Newbury Street, 202C
Boston, MA 02115

Such a deal!

Out and About



Delaware to be Home to New Regional Bi Network

Two regional bisexual groups currently exist in the U.S.: the East Coast Bisexual Network (ECBN), and the recently created North American Multicultural Bisexual Network. A new regional group — the Mid-Atlantic Bisexual Network — has just been formed and will be centered in Wilmington, Delaware. The purpose of the new network will be to provide a means for bisexuals and bisexual groups in the Mid-Atlantic region to communicate with each other and to cooperate on joint projects whenever possible.

According to the network's founder Barbara Stratton of Wilmington, Delaware, many bisexuals in the Mid-Atlantic area just do not feel close enough to Boston to really get involved in the East Coast network. "Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York City all have very large, active bisexual communities. Groups in D.C. and Philadelphia have both recently started major bisexual newsletters, and in Delaware, the new bisexual social group has stirred a lot of interest. I felt it was time we started to work together and create a more unified bisexual voice."

Invitations to join the new network have already been mailed to all of the major bisexual groups in the region. The first project of the network will be to coordinate participation of the numerous bisexual groups in each city's Gay Pride Day celebrations to be held this summer. The idea for the project was created this past June during the first U.S. National Bisexual Conference held in San Francisco.

New York Bisexual Support Group

The New York Bisexual Support Group continues to meet on the 2nd Sunday of each month from 4:30pm-6:00pm at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center (208 W. 13th Street, NYC). The professionally facilitated meetings are devoted to dealing with the personal issues faced by bi people. The atmosphere is safe, confidential, and non-judgmental. Oftentimes, they have dinner together after the meetings. The meeting agendas are non-political.

Robyn Ochs Teaches Course on Bisexuality at MIT



MIT has become the second university in the United States (and perhaps the world) to offer a bisexual studies course. Entitled *Contexts and Constructs: Bisexuality*, the course came about as a result of student activism. Rebecca Kaplan, an MIT junior, persuaded the Women's Studies Department to agree to offer a course on the subject, provided that a mutually satisfactory instructor could be located. Robyn Ochs was approached and agreed to teach the class. The 19 students in the class (10 women and 9 men) have covered many topics: definitions of bisexuality; theories of sexual identity and identity development; oppression theory; images of bisexuals in mainstream society; bisexuality in communities of color; bisexuality from a cross-cultural perspective; legal, social and public policy issues for bisexuals; bisexuality through the lenses of women's studies and gay studies; bisexuals in lesbian and gay communities; the development of bisexuals' political identity; and the history of bisexual movements in the US and other countries. Using *Bi Any Other Name*, *Bisexuality: A Reader and Sourcebook*, and *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence* as the main texts of the course, readings have come from a variety of other sources, ranging from the *Journal of Homosexuality*, to regional newsletters, to periodicals such as *Newsweek*, *Outweek* and the *National Inquirer*. ▽

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LABELS

An essay by
Barbara Stratton

The label bisexual is associated with many negative stereotypes. Bisexuals are oversexed, non-monogamous, and confused individuals who flit in and out of the gay community whenever they find it convenient. We spread AIDS between straights and gays and can always hide in the straight world whenever we need to. Also, women who are bisexual take precious energy away from lesbian circles and give it to men. With such negative images associated with the bisexual label then why do I claim it? The answer is because it is accurate.

For a long time I have been accustomed to wearing a label that makes people want to spit when I walk by. At age 15 I "came out" as a feminist by writing a book report on *The Emerging Woman* about the sexist traditions ingrained in the traditional wedding ceremony. My parents, sisters, and boyfriends all disliked the feminist label I chose primarily because of their own interpretations of what being a feminist meant. But, acceptance or not, I could not find a better word to describe my belief in the necessity for the equal treatment of women and men.


If there were a better word to describe my sexuality I would certainly use it. The word bisexual in itself is sterile, technical, and includes a reference to sex unlike the more friendly sounding lesbian or gay. Also present is the inherent problem of relying on a single word to describe or represent the complex nature of any individual's intimate relationships with others. Perhaps instead I could be known as a recovering heterosexual prone to relapses, or more simply . . . a *heterodyke*.

My own mother somewhat understands the fact that I have relationships with other women. What she refuses to understand is why "who I sleep with" is a political issue.

Lesbians, on the other hand, understand my relationships with women, yet reject my relationships with men. Sometimes I feel as though I spend all of my time trying to convince my mother that sexuality is a political issue, while trying to convince lesbians that who you sleep with is *not that much* of a political issue.

My straight friends react with bewilderment when I describe the discrimination I face as a bisexual within the gay and lesbian community. Obviously my relationships with men are acceptable, familiar, and normal to them. It is my relationships with women, however, that make me different, unusual, and very-much-a-homosexual thank you. As an example, just ask my former supervisor whether being a bisexual versus a lesbian made any difference to her when she identified my sexuality as grounds for a dismissal.

Given the common society in which we live I can partly accept why heterosexuals do not understand or feel that they can relate to gays. What I am much less patient about however, is the lack of understanding from gays and lesbians regarding bisexuals. A lesbian I know recently asked me why, if I am dating a woman, don't I just call myself a lesbian? My response was to ask her that if she was not dating anyone at all — why doesn't she just label herself straight? Other lesbians have told me that they just do not feel anything in common with bisexual women. I am sorry, but is taking the significant step over the border into same sex relationships not enough to qualify someone as part of the gay community? If so then what are the other tests involved?

Not all bisexuals, of course, want to be involved in the gay community. The founder of one bisexual network is definitely what I would call a bisexual separatist — including visions of a national organization similar to the NGLTF. Personally, I feel that bisexuals do need some of their own space to affirm their identity. At the same time, I have always, and will always reach to the gay community for support, lovers, and political allies. I do, however, refuse to change my identity to gain that support. Hopefully, someday the question will again be raised, "Where do bisexuals fit in?" and the answer will be the same for bisexuals as it will be for lesbians and gays — EVERYWHERE. 

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Northampton, from page 1

concerns of the sixty people present and the entire official planning committee, which consisted at that time of seven lesbians, actually walked out of the room ten minutes into the meeting.) A group of people branched off and formed a committee for an all-inclusive march, which consisted of 25 - 30 people, about one third of whom were bisexual.

I drove out to Northampton this May 4 with a carful of lesbian and bi-women friends and strong feelings of ambivalence. I was afraid of witnessing anger, pain and hostility, and wasn't quite sure what to expect. We arrived just in time to stand on the sidelines and watch most of the march pass by before joining it at the end. While I did not see a specifically bisexual contingent, I was amazed to see many more banners that included the word bisexual than I have ever seen in a march. In addition, many marchers carried signs or wore bisexual pride t-shirts or buttons. Particularly memorable were "If I'm your enemy, who's your friend?" "Bi Bi Separatists — Don't Reign On My Parade," "Back BI Popular Demand," and "A March Bi Any Other Name is Divisive."

Then the rally: next to the official table selling "Lesbian and Gay Pride" t-shirts was a Queer Nation table which was selling a shirt which said "Diversity is Our Strength, Unity is Our Power," depicting three arms, one each labelled lesbian, gay and bisexual, holding hands to form the border of a pink triangle. While I have no official figures, it was obvious that the inclusive t-shirt was far outselling the non-inclusive one. Many people of all sexualities were wearing the inclusive t-shirt.

The speakers at the rally covered a variety of topics, some of which directly addressed bisexuality. The two who most directly addressed bisexuality were Sarah Dreher and Elisa Campbell.

Sarah Dreher is an author, psychologist, and one of the women who led the effort to exclude bisexuals from the title and steering committee of the march. In her speech, she attributed the struggle for inclusivity to "lesbo-phobia," saying that "bisexuals and gay men were trying to undermine the march because lesbians made up a majority of the committee and did most of the work" and accused detractors of trying to weaken the lesbian community. Her belief is that "common sexual oppression

does not make a community" and does not understand why bisexual people feel that they have a right to be included in the lesbian and gay community. She accused Face to Face, the local lesbian, gay and bisexual speakers bureau of allowing bisexuals to "speak for lesbians." She claimed that one bisexual woman said at a speaking engagement that "most lesbians she knew sleep with men," and asked the lesbians in the audience if this is how they want to be represented. She said that bisexuals can not and should not speak for lesbians, and that she is not willing to give up her lesbian power or lesbian identity. Dreher stated that those who have been fighting for the inclusion of bisexuals have "redefined the oppressed as the oppressors," and are trying to "reduce all our issues to sexual ones." During this part of her speech, a group of people in the audience were chanting "biphobic, biphobic, biphobic...." Another group was shouting "We are not the enemy." The remainder of her speech was devoted to discussing the need to support lesbian culture, lesbian businesses, and lesbian space. Reaction to Dreher's speech was mixed, with a minority of people cheering her on, others in tears, and others looking very uncomfortable.

The other speaker who directly addressed bisexuality, Elisa Campbell, came out publicly last year as a bisexual woman. She is in her second term on the Amherst Select Board and is chairperson for that board. She said that since coming out she has had only positive reactions from people and encouraged more lesbians, gay men and bisexuals to participate in government, saying "Don't stay in the closet and don't stay out of the political process." She looks forward to the day when "everyone can be free to be who they are, as they are, and open about it."

In summary, what seems to be happening in Northampton is that an apparent minority of people (mostly lesbian) are opposed to the inclusion of bisexual people and are feeling extremely threatened by the enormous movement toward inclusivity taking place in the community as a whole. A much larger number of lesbians and gay men than ever before are in favor of recognizing and including the bisexuals in "their" community. I wonder what will happen next, and what steps will be taken to heal this extremely painful rift in the western Massachusetts lesbian community. So far, two events have been scheduled. On March 9 a "Politics of Queer" forum was held in Northampton. A community meeting has been scheduled in June to discuss the future of the march.

Note: the Committee for an All-Inclusive March can be reached at P.O. Box 280, Hadley MA 01035. ▼



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To Whom it May Concern:

Write Mother a Letter

The following is from a letter sent to Mother Jones magazine by Loraine Hutchins, Co-Editor of BI ANY OTHER NAME: Bisexual People Speak Out (Alyson Pub., 1991)

Your May/June 1991 issue is fantastic on the whole However, I must protest your humor piece by Molly Ivins, "War Texas Style," where she repeats the political joke from her state — Q: "What do you call an Iraqi with a camel under one arm and a sheep under the other?" A: "A bisexual." and ends with her guilt-ridden remark, "Why is it I don't think they tell these jokes in San Francisco?" She knows why. So do we. They're not funny. She knows they aren't funny. That was her point in repeating them, I'm sure. But still, the way it's repeated, with NO context, and NO explanation, leaves Mother Jones responsible for perpetrating bi-phobia and homophobia, not addressing it. Your editorial choices show you're beginning to be beyond that. Better coverage of what bisexuals actually are doing and saying would help more than bashing jokes, though. There's a national bi network, several bi anthologies out, and more coming. Bisexuals are organizing for visibility on many campuses and in many cities across the nation and across the globe. That's what's hot news, not sick Iraqi jokes!

Go on, write your Mother a letter:

Backtalk, Mother Jones, 1663 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number.

Stop This Film!

The following appeared on the computer network SAPPHO-NET, sent by sappho-net member and GLAAD/SFBA co-chair Jesse Greenman. Submitted by Robyn Ochs.

"Basic Instinct," a movie starring Michael Douglas ("Fatal Attraction" etc.) and directed by Paul Verhoeven ("Robocop" and "Total Recall" etc.), is currently in production and scheduled for national release in early 1992. **THE FILM FEATURES THREE WOMEN, ALL BISEXUAL OR LESBIAN, AND ALL EITHER ACTUAL OR IMPLIED MANKILLERS.**

In the past year, Hollywood has released over 20 movies that peddle homophobia. These include movies that depict us as murderers, psychopaths, swishing fags, and man-hating dykes; movies that present homosexuality as a social problem, that make light of gay-bashing; and movies with fag and dyke jokes. Hate crimes against lesbian people are increasing every year while Hollywood continues to pander to homophobia and laughs all the way to the bank.

ORGANIZE AGAINST THE MOVIE "BASIC INSTINCT!" Prepare now to educate and galvanize your local communities before the film's release in early 1992. Contact your areas movie theater booking agents and ask them to exercise some conscience and refrain from scheduling the movie at their theaters because it inflames social tensions. Sensitize your local media and especially the film reviewers to display some sense of social responsibility when reviewing this movie. Get people to call or write the film company, Carolco, and urge them not to release this hateful film. Address communication to Buzz Feitshans, Executive Vice President for Motion Picture Production, Carolco, 8800 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 289-7144.

This information is brought to you as a public service by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter (GLAAD/SFBA), 347 Dolores St. Rm. 312, San Francisco CA 94110; phone and fax (415) 861-4588.

Updates



LG(B) Studies

Here is a well-crafted letter sent to the organizers of the 1991 Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference #5, to be held at Rutgers University [See Feb./Mar. 1991 issue of BiWomen]:

As a graduate of Rutgers University (Class of '83) and a gay man, I was thrilled to learn that my alma mater would be hosting the Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference in October of this year. However, I was somewhat disappointed to learn that the term "Bisexual" would be dropped from the official title. In the past few years I have had the occasion to work closely with bisexual men and women in my capacity as a teacher, doctoral candidate, and activist here on the Harvard campus. I have been impressed time and again by their commitment to gay rights and their tireless efforts toward furthering the causes of the community as a whole. In fact, among the dozens of lesbian, gay men, and bisexuals in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures here at Harvard, it was one

To Whom . . . continued on next page

Salem-based bi woman, 34, looking to form support/social group with other North Shore bi women in their late 20s - ? If you are interested please call (617) 247-6683 and leave your name and number for Patrice. All calls will be returned with discretion.

To Whom . . ., from previous page

woman — a bisexual — who found the time to attend the March on Washington in 1987.

I have also come to understand the causes of the bisexual community in particular, especially the very basic need for recognition as bisexuals. To treat them as a subcategory of "gay" and "lesbian" is tantamount to denying them the same sort of recognition they have been struggling long and hard to help us achieve. I therefore protest the unilateral decision on the part of the organizing committee to remove the term "bisexual" from the conference title. In doing so we are committing a grave injustice not only against our bisexual sisters and brothers, but against our community as a whole, since from the very beginning their activism has been one and the same with our own.

Please understand that I support your efforts in every other way. I ask only that you reconsider a decision that was arrived at perhaps a little too hastily.

Most sincerely,

Gregory S. Hutchinson

Instructor in Spanish

Send your own letters to:

Lesbian and Gay Studies #5, c/o CCACC,
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey,
8 Bishop Place, New Brunswick, New Jersey
08903

Creating Change

A two-page letter from a group of twelve bi activists was sent in late April to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, urging that "bisexuals be included in the language and the content of the November 1991 Creating Change Conference." [See the April/May 1991 issue of *BiWomen*.] The letter includes five detailed proposals for accomplishing that goal.

First, they propose an official bi caucus for Creating Change 1991, to be listed on the

Typists needed
for the newsletter on
Saturday, July 13.
Call Kathy at
(617) 629-2915 to volunteer.

schedule and given the same status as other caucuses. They also propose that bi activists, with specific expertise, be integrated into other panels; and that a workshop track dealing with bisexual people of color issues [be presented at] the pre-conference People of Color Institute.

They propose two main conference workshops: Dialogue Between the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Communities — Where Our Interests Mesh and Where They Diverge; and Integrating LesBiGay Resources into More Curricula.

Lastly, the activists offer to work with the NGLTF to incorporate a list of other topics into the overall program.

Hetrick-Martin Institute

Last year there was a nationwide "flap" about alleged biphobia at the Hetrick-Martin Institute (HMI) Harvey Milk School for gay, lesbian, and bisexual teenagers. [See *BiWomen* April/May 1990, page 6]. After numerous protest phone calls and letters, HMI decided to have a "Bisexual Awareness Workshop" for its administrators and faculty. Of course, their official position is that the conduct of the 7/31/90 workshop was independent of any protests. Nevertheless, the important thing is that the workshop occurred. And the HMI Director said that the participants reported that the workshop was stimulating, provocative, and very well done.

. . . HMI continues to be an outstanding institution with a new found bisexual awareness to better help its bisexual clients.

— Reported in the New York Bisexual Support Group newsletter of May 1991. (NYBSG address: P.O. Box 2550, Manhattanville Station, New York, NY 10027. Phone: 212/865-1854). ▽

Telephone (617) 455-6189

BET MacARTHUR, ACSW, LICSW
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NAMBN, from page 1

maintain the mailing list, an stay in contact with general members and regional contacts, etc.

2) regional contacts (as individuals or groups)

This group will assist with the coordination of any events in their area, helping bis in their region find other bis, supply information about news and events in their region, or any other type of service in which they want to be involved. The names and numbers and/or addresses of regional contacts will be provided to other members in that region who wish to contact the network in their area.

3) general members

Every individual and/or group will be listed as a member, and will receive all general mailings. All members are invited to all general meetings.

c) That the immediate purpose of the network is "the collection of information from and dissemination of that information to members of the North American bisexual community." We agreed that we may add to this as the network develops.

d) That the network should have a post office box address, and will get a phone number when we have a workplace.

e) That a newsletter would be created as a resource to list and report on groups, contacts, news, and events in bisexual communities across the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

f) That we are committed to regional, age, class, racial, religious, ability, and ethnic diversity, and to a gender balance.

g) That a re-evaluation and a possible re-organization meeting will be held in the summer of 1991 by members of the network. (Please see the questionnaire [on page 11], and return it if you would be interested in attending this meeting).

Many thanks to everyone who attended the organizational meetings during the conference

and to those who laid the preliminary groundwork, making the network a reality.

The questionnaire [on page 11] is an opportunity to reach out to those who might be interested in being a part of this network. Eventually, we hope to be able to build the network into an organization which could, among other things, promote and fund programs and cultural events for bisexuals; deal with the defamation and discrimination of bisexuals; work with lesbian and gay organizations in fighting against both homophobia and biphobia while working for bisexual liberation and civil rights as members of the sexual minority community; and to help build a more cohesive, multicultural and racially diverse, bisexual community across North America.

Bisexuals are becoming more visible and vocal as a dynamic community. Our future depends on our continuing to organize, working against the isolation that keeps us apart. This network is a big step towards expanding a sense of unity that we seek. Your help and commitment, in whatever form, can make the network flourish. Though no one likes to ask for money, the truth is that this network needs your support. If everyone we're contacting donates a little, we'll be well on our way to raising the initial funds we need to fuel our efforts.

Thank you for your generosity, and for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Michael Ambrosino, Portland, OR

Lani Kaahumanu, San Francisco, CA

Gary North, Long Beach, CA

Cianna Stewart, Berkeley, CA

Ben E. Factory, Seattle, WA

Lisa Jean Moore, San Francisco, CA

Laura L. Sachs, Boston, MA

Naomi Tucker, San Francisco, CA

and other Core Work Group Volunteers
of the NAMBN




John Barry, LICSW

Individual, couple, family and group therapy

(617) 641-3413

**Be a part of the North
American Multicultural
Bisexual Network!**

**Copy and fill out this
form** 



NAMBN

North American Multicultural Bisexual Network
584 Castro St, P.O. Box #441, San Francisco, CA, U.S.A., 94114-2588



Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Country _____ Zip _____

Telephone# (____) _____

Are you interested in volunteering for the network? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ undecided

If so, what specific skill(s) could you contribute? Please check below:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Typing | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Contact Person | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

As mentioned in the cover letter, the network will have three different types of involvement. Please check which one(s) you are interested in:

- ☐ a regional contact for (region): _____
- ☐ part of the core work committee
- ☐ a general member

We are currently planning the next general meeting, which will be held this summer. Current thoughts are possibly to have a meeting July 13-14 in Seattle. The following is not a registration, but will be used to get a preliminary estimate on the size of the meeting(s) this summer.

- ☐ I/We might be interested in attending the general meeting. Please send further information.
How many might attend? _____
Would you need housing or could you make other arrangements? _____
- ☐ I/We won't be able to attend a general meeting in July, but might be able to at some other point in the summer. Please send further information.
- ☐ I am/We are interested in coordinating a regional meeting in preparation for, or as follow up to, the general meeting.
- ☐ I/We would like to attend regional meetings in preparation for a general meeting, or as follow up to that meeting. Please send information on my regional contact.

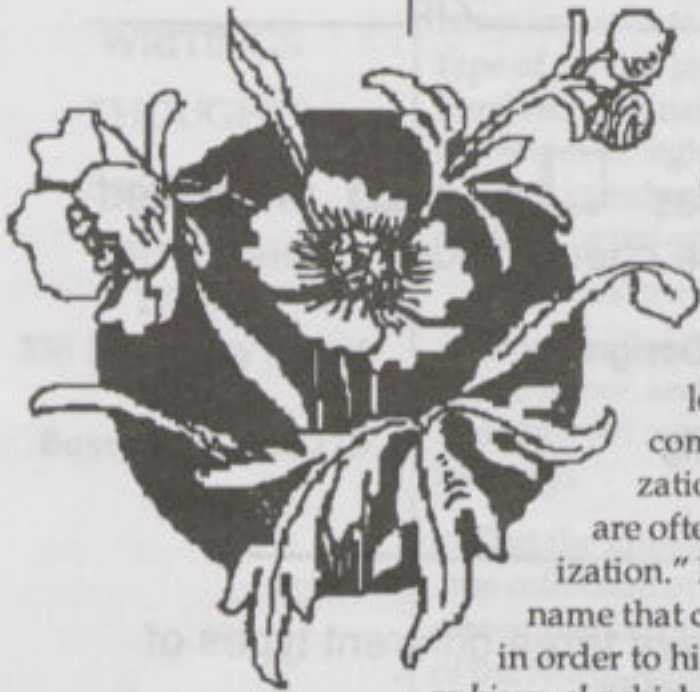
I am donating... ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$10 ☐ \$5 ☐ \$ _____

(Please make all checks payable to the North American Multicultural Bisexual Network - NAMBN)

Please add any additional comments on the back of this questionnaire. Thank you!

Attention Cantabridgians: Again with the B-Word

Cambridge Lavender Alliance Meeting



On Wednesday, March 27, a group of 25-28 people gathered for the second meeting of the fledgling Cambridge Lavender Alliance.

The first issue addressed was whether or not to include *bisexual* in the title.

This discussion led into a longer one regarding "What comes after the colon?" (Organizations and book titles these days are often subject to rampant "colonization." In some organizations, the name that comes before the colon is used in order to hide the real words *gay*, *lesbian* or *bisexual*, which comes after the colon. Thus, the queerness of an organization can be closeted to suit the context.) Once the group endorsed using the "real" words, the vote was 16 for, 4 against, and 4 abstaining, to include *bisexual* along with *gay* and *lesbian* in the "after the colon" part of the title. The word *progressive* was also discussed and accepted for the title, but the word *queer* was discouraged by someone concerned about scaring off people new to lesbian-gay organizing. Everyone was invited to write down and bring a possible clever-acronym name to the next meeting.

The following "con" points were made in the Bisexual Name Game Discussion:

1. This group is about gay and lesbian rights, so the name should be "gay and lesbian." Bisexuals are in the group to fight for gay and lesbian rights, not the "heterosexual side of their bisexual rights." In other words, the oppression of heterosexism of the mainstream establishment is of primary importance in this group, and any harm or "oppression" that the bisexuals experience from the gay/lesbian community is not primary.

2. Bisexuals have not been seen "carrying the gay and lesbian banners" in the past.

3. Purpose of the group: Protest heterosexism *vs.* celebrate queer identity? Besides being a group to organize against heterosexist oppression, we are also a group with a positive and joyful queer identity (i.e., if all of the homophobes were gone tomorrow, would we still have an identity? Yes, because we are not purely a defensive community.). So the words "Cambridge Lavender Alliance for Gay-Bi-Lesbians" differ from the words "of Gay-Bi-Lesbians" if used in the title. The latter

assumes our queer identity, not just our position on issues.

On the other hand, the "pro"-bi comments were:

1. Some of us have been marching "under the gay and lesbian banner" for ten to twenty years, but we have not been out as bisexuals because of biphobia in the gay and lesbian community. [Like Simon Nkoli, the South African Black gay activist said, "When they ask, 'Where were the gays in the liberation struggle?' it sounds silly for me to say, 'I was there beside you all along, but you just didn't see me.'"]

2. We will gladly participate in this group if our name is in the title. But don't expect us to be so wild to come to more (arf!) meetings in our busy lives if we do the work but don't get any credit.

There was general agreement that the focus of the group was to expose the heterosexism of the larger world more than to focus on biphobia within the gay/lesbian community. So where does biphobia get addressed? I felt that, by making time for a discussion (and putting this question first on the agenda), the community did deal quite successfully with this group's potential biphobia. I was proud of all who spoke and voted, and, as I hoped, I left the meeting feeling energized. I hope we continue to watch out for and care for each other in the context of rising sexual hate crimes, AIDS statistics, warmongering, right-wing political victories, and budget cuts.

Other discussions focused on future actions, events, workgroups, and committees. Three committees were formed: one to deal with youth; another to plan a Cambridge feeder march for Pride; and a third to deal with PR and outreach. We also plan to talk soon with Cambridge's new police commissioner. Watch calendars for times and places [of future meetings]; and, thanks to the bigals and our allies who attended this meeting, we can "come as we are." Huzzah!

— Marcia Deihl

Psychologists Group Becomes Inclusive

The New England Association of Lesbian and Gay Psychologists recently voted 12 - 6 to become the New England Association of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Psychologists. This name change was first proposed by Leah Fygetakis, a Boston lesbian psychologist, last fall, and the vote took place on April 21. When asked why someone who was not herself a bisexual would raise this issue, Fygetakis replied, "Because I know Robyn Ochs." "But,

Psychologists continued on next page

“In itself,
homosexuality is as
limiting as
heterosexuality;
the ideal should be to
be capable of loving
a woman or a man;
either, a human being,
without feeling
fear, restraint, or
obligation.”

—Simone De Beauvoir

Psychologists, from previous page

seriously,” she added, “after getting to know bisexuals personally, biphobia and its effects became clear to me. Ever since then, I can’t help it. When I see biphobia or bisexual exclusion and have an opportunity to address it, I try to. We share a lot in common, and it will only help us all to work together.”

[Leah Fygetakis is the Director of the Counseling Center at Boston University and a therapist with a private practice on Newbury Street. For more information about the psychologists’ group, call Leah at (617) 353-3540.]

— Robyn Ochs

A Place Where All Are Welcome



PHILADELPHIA, PA — Two bi activists, Lee Carter and Jill Nagle, went to the opening for Penguin Place, the new lesbian and gay community center, on February 17th to congratulate the leaders and learn more about the center. Lee learned that, while the Board viewed Penguin Place as being for all sexual minorities, only “self-identified lesbians and gay men” were allowed to vote. Penguin Place Board members did not view this rule as discriminatory. Carter asked how the group defined lesbian or gay. No definition had been agreed on.

Although Penguin Place had not explicitly consulted other sexual minorities than “self-identified lesbians and gay men,” they appeared to be willing to discuss the issue. Since that time, Peg Conway, Executive Director of the Mayor’s Commission for Sexual Minorities has been in contact with Penguin Place Board member Marge McCann, who said that the Penguin Place Board will allow self-identified bisexual and transgendered people to hold voting memberships as well.

Penguin Place is to be commended for their decision. Voting members contribute four months of committee work, or thirty hours, whichever comes first. There is also an annual membership fee of \$10.00. Board meetings are held on Tuesday nights and are open to all. The address is 201 S. Camac Street. We strongly encourage bi’s to get involved with Penguin Place. This is an opportunity for queers of all persuasions to work together as allies to build community and eliminate forces which oppress us all. We’re here, we’re queer, and we’re all in this together!

— From the Spring 1991 issue of *BiFocus*, a newsletter for Philadelphia’s bisexual community, P.O. Box 30372, Philadelphia, PA 19103. One year (4 issues): \$12 individual, \$20 institution/supporting.

An L.A. Law Story

Behold the following second-hand TV gossip taken from the *Bisexual Electronic Mail Network*:

More news about CJ and Abby, the two *LA Law* characters who “came out” a few weeks ago. After a television kiss between the two women (NOT a common TV occurrence), one said to the other that she still likes men. The other responded, “Well so do I.” In the April 25 episode of *LA Law*, Abby asked CJ out on a date. She suggested that the two go out to dinner to celebrate the fact that she’s back at the law firm, and CJ said “Sure, we’ll get Tommy and Michael and call it a foursome.” Abby said, “Well, actually I was hoping we could be alone.” “You mean a date?” “No ... well, yes!”

— Submitted by Robyn Ochs

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BBWN

338 Newbury Street, 202C

Boston, MA 02115

The Bi Bi Blues

Words and music by Kathleen Hepburn

Slow Blues Swing

F / / / F⁷ / / / B^b / B^{b7} / F / / /

I got the Blues, ___ I got the Bi-sex - 'l Blues, I know just what I like but I don't know which to choose; I got

C / / / B^b / B^{b7} / F⁷ / F / / /

1. this one on my left and I got that one on my right, ___ but who to spend my life with, or even just the night, it gives me the
2. she or he or him or her I tell you I don't care, ___ they all look fine to me, they just got different underwear, and I got the
3. Which crowd to hang out with, or who to try to please, I tell you all that kind or nonsense can just bring me to my knees and give me the
4. who or why I am I tried to find it in a book; ___ when I thought I had it figured out I took another look and I sang the
5. friends, my lovers, well they all get intertwined, ___ and I might lose some platonic friends if they could read my mind, I'd be singin' the

B^b / / / B^{b7} / / / F / / / 1. - 5. 6. F / / /

Blues, ___ the	Choosin' - Gets - Confusin' Blues, ___	2. Is it	Well I
Blues, ___ the	Sittin' - on - the - Fence Blues, ___		
Blues, ___ the	Middle - of - the - Road Blues, ___	4. Just	
Blues, ___ the	Passion - Is - Irrational Blues, ___	5. My	
Blues, ___ the	Cruisin' - for - a - Bruisin' Blues*, ___		

C / C⁷ / B^b / B^{b7} / F F⁷ B^b B^{b7} F C F⁷

know just what I like but I don't know which to choose, I got the Blues ___ The Bi Bi Bi Blues ___

* Please hold your hand over your heart as you sing this line, to imply that you are referring to an emotional "brutisin'." I do not in any way want to encourage the idea of physical violence in response to a bisexual orientation.

Bi Bi Blues © 1991 by Kathleen Hepburn. This song may be performed or reproduced without my expressed written consent, unless it is for profit, in which case you must first obtain my permission in writing. This is a work in progress. Please feel free to suggest additional verses or changes in the lyrics. Kathleen Hepburn, c/o BBWN, 338 Newbury Street, Suite 202C, Boston, MA 02115

G A Y

L E S B I A N

B I S E X U A L

H E T E R O S E X U A L

E T C E T C E T C E T C E T C

D O E S Y O U R V I S I O N

I N C L U D E E V E R Y O N E ?

CALENDAR

THE CENTER
is the Lesbian and Gay
Community Center, 338
Newbury Street, Suite 202C,
Boston, MA 02115.

Ongoing Events:



Sundays:

Alateen Group open to bisexual, lesbian and gay youth 22 and under who are affected by alcoholism in a family member or a close friend. 6pm. At the Center.



Mondays:

Bisexual Alcoholics Anonymous. 7:30-8:30pm, Mass. General Hospital, under Amphitheater (go past the Lower Amphitheater, take stairs up 3 flights). Closed speaker-discussion. Info: leave message for Ingrid at (617) 641-3281.



Tuesdays:

Bisexual Women's Rap Group. 7:30pm-10pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Central Square, Cambridge, MA. All women welcome. Call (617) 354-6658 for more info.



Wednesdays:

Bisexual Children of Alcoholics. 7:30pm. An Al-Anon meeting for bisexual children of alcoholics. Mass. General Hospital, lower amphitheater (next to the emergency room entrance), Boston, MA. Call Marge at (617) 259-1559 for more info.

June 2 ◆ Sunday

Bi Space, 8pm. A place for bisexual people to meet and talk. No agenda or set topic. \$2 suggested donation. Sponsored by the East Coast Bisexual Network. At The Center. Info: (617) 247-6683.

BBWN Introductory Meeting, 7:30pm. A safe space for women who want to learn more about bisexuality — myths, theories, experiences — and to connect with the bi community. All women welcome! At the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, Mass.

June 7 ◆ Friday

Bi Fest '91 Opening Schmooze, 5pm-midnight. Place: Room 14E-310 at MIT on Memorial Drive. Red line, Kendall stop. Meet other bisexual people, hang out, sign up to help with events. Info: see enclosed flyer or call (617) BIS-MOVE.

Bi Fest '91 Film Festival, 7pm-midnight. Place: Room 14E-316 and 14E-325 at MIT on Memorial Drive. Red line, Kendall stop. Info: see enclosed flyer or call (617) BIS-MOVE.

Swingtime Boston Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Swing and Ballroom Dance, 8:15pm-midnight. Free lesson 8:15-9pm. Dance the night away to the fabulous sounds of Cheek to Cheek, Boston's Lesbian and Gay Swing Orchestra. Smoke- and alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. At the Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Harvard Square. Info: (617) 661-1792.

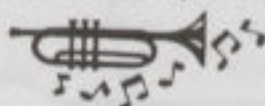
The Second Annual Pride Harbor Cruise, sponsored by The Center and the Pride Committee. 8:30-11:30pm on the Cape Anne, which will be docked on Northern Ave., Boston (one block from Atlantic Ave.). Music, dancing, cash bar. \$15 donation. Tickets/Info: (617) 262-7760, or visit The Center.

June 8 ◆ Saturday

BBWN Pre-Pride Brunch, 9-11:30am at the Community Church of Boston, 565 Boylston St., Copley Square, Boston. Open to all bisexual women and their friends. This is a fundraiser for BBWN; admission is \$5. If you can't make the brunch, meet under the steaming kettle in Government Center between 11:30am and noon.

Boston's 21st Pride Day! Brunch and festivities begin at 9:30am on the City Hall Plaza. March at noon. Rally in the Boston Common at 2pm. Keynote speakers: Urvashi Vaid, Executive Director of the National Lesbian and Gay Task Force, and Congressman Barney Frank. Sponsored by The Center and Pride Committee. Live radio broadcast on WMBR 88.1 FM.

Bi Fest '91 "Everything That Moves" Dance, open to all bisexuals, lesbians, gay men and friends. Alcohol and smoke free; \$5 sliding scale. Walker Memorial at MIT, 142 Memorial Drive, Cambridge — this is the hottest place to be Saturday night!



June 9 ◆ Sunday

More Bi Fest Activities! See enclosed flyer, or call (617) BIS-MOVE for details.

June 14 ◆ Friday

Romanovsky and Phillips in Concert, 8pm. Celebrating their new album: "Be Political Not Polite." Pat Humphries opening and comic Linda Moakes emcee. Paine Hall, Harvard University. Tickets \$15. Info/Reservations: (617) 497-3019.

June 15 ◆ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Bi Brunch. At the Downtown Cafe, 12 Lagrange St. (off Tremont), Boston. A private bi brunch (the restaurant will be closed to the general public), for only \$10 per person! Such a deal! Meet outside at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

June 16 ◆ Sunday

Dykes Dialogue: Eradicating BiPhobia, 4pm with Laura Sachs and Rebecca Kaplan at The Center. Info: (617) 247-2927.

June 18 ◆ Tuesday

Bi Community Forum to discuss the possibility of forming a co-ed network. OPEN TO ALL. 7-10pm in Room 203 at The Center. See details on page 2.

June 20 ◆ Thursday

Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Speakers Bureau Meeting, 8-10pm. At The Center. Info: (617) 354-0133.

June 21 ◆ Friday

Ballroom Dance for Lesbians/Gays/Bisexuals/Friends, free Fox Trot lesson 8-8:30pm; dance 8:30-11:30pm at the First Church of Jamaica Plain. Smoke- and alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. Info: (617) 859-9455.

July 5 ◆ Friday

Swingtime Boston Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Swing and Ballroom Dance, 8:15pm-midnight. See June 7.

July 7 ◆ Sunday

Bi Space, 8pm. See June 2.

July 13 ◆ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Potluck Picnic on the Esplanade, 12noon-3pm. Meet at the statue of Arthur Fiedler's head for eventual move to Esplanade Hatch Shell (shade trees). Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

July 16 ◆ Tuesday

Bi Community Forum (tentative) to continue discussion of the possibility of forming a co-ed network. To be held if enough interest is expressed at the June 18 meeting. OPEN TO ALL. 7-10pm in Room 203 at The Center. See details on page 2.

CALENDAR continued on page 4

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Bi Women

The Newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network

The "Born That Way" Trap

by Lindsay Van Gelder

This article appeared in Ms. Vol. 1, No. 6. If you haven't seen the new Ms. yet, take a look! Every issue is 100 ad-free pages of feminism, with all of the courage of the old Ms. and none of the fluff of the recently folded version of Ms.

When the Episcopal Diocese of Newark recently established a ministry to welcome gay people into the church, the bishop told the *New York Times*: "We are not ready to accept the prejudice and ignorance that homosexuality is a matter of choice or reflects moral depravity." And when *Child* magazine published a sympathetic article on how straight parents can learn to be supportive of their gay children, the lead quoted a gay man who recognized his sexual orientation when he was barely out of kindergarten. "Many people believe that a person chooses to be a

Born That Way continues on page 4

National Bisexual Network Moves Ahead

SEATTLE — Twenty-two years after the modern lesbian-gay movement began, a U.S. network for bisexual people has been organized.

BiNet — the Bisexual Network of the U.S.A. (formerly the North American Multicultural Bisexual Network) held its second annual conference July 13-14 in Seattle to continue the work begun the year before at the First National Bisexual Conference in San Francisco (attended by more than 450 people from throughout the world).

At the Seattle conference, 50 organizers representing at least 26 groups from throughout the United States developed several work groups, a quarterly newsletter, and strategies and procedures for working with people in various communities — particularly racial, sexual, and other oppressed minorities, non-urban areas, etc.

BiNet continues on page 7

Why are all these people smiling? Are they gay? Are they queer? Are they just plain happy?

Details on page 2 of BiWomen ...



BBWN News . . .

Honor Roll

Sharla C. • Lucy F. •
Donna • Amanda U.-
K. • JonaKarina F. •
Marcia D. • Laura W.
• Sidney S. • Leah F. •
Kimball D. • Sue S. •
Kathleen H. • Sue R. •
Laura S. • Claire M. •
[REDACTED] • Shaun M.
• Charnan B. • Ruth L.
• Robyn O. •
Stephanie B. • Gail Z.
• Sharon G. • Ann G.
• Rebecca K. •
Lynne L. • Annie P. •
Tess H.-D. • [REDACTED]
• Michelle H. •
Deanna M. • Eve D. •
Clare T. • Doreen A. •
Beth G. • Pam E. •
Becky S. • Lisa W. •
Liz H. • Nina C. •
Bobbi K. • Liz N. •
Rebecca G.

We would also like to
thank the following for
their Bi Fest work

Jeff M. • David D. •
Bobby B. • Wayne B. •
Brett A. • Alan H. •
Woody G.

as well as many folks not
listed. Thanks to you all.

BiWomen is published
bi-monthly, of course.

Editor: Kathleen Hepburn

Assistant Editor: Susan
Schiefelbein

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Contributors:
Beth Grace, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Sarah Dreher,
Stephanie Berger

Photographers: Beth
Grace, Efrain J. Gonzalez

Bi-Fest a Rousing Success!

Bi Fest '91 was held
during the weekend
of Boston Pride, June
7-10, 1991.

Workshops, a film
series and a dance
made for a fantastic
weekend full of bi
politics, culture, food
and fun. Bi Fest was
sponsored by the
East Coast Bisexual
Network, but folks
from BBWN, BBMN
and other networks
outside of the Boston
area also worked
hard to make the
Festival a success. A

great deal of Bi Fest was also sponsored by
GAMIT (Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and their
Friends at Massachusetts Institute of
Technology). Many of the weekend's events
were held at M.I.T., thanks to the work of
Rebecca Kaplan. Thank you, Rebecca!
Pictured above right ↗ are a few of the
organizers: (L to R) Drew Lewis, Susan
Rooney, Rebecca Kaplan, JonaKarina
Freedman, Wayne Bryant, Laura Sachs,
[REDACTED] and Liz Highleyman.



PHOTO: EFRAIN J. GONZALEZ

Boston Pride Day

The Boston Gay Pride Parade was the largest
in its history, with nearly 100,000 in
attendance. Pictured at right ↘ is the
banner for ECBN. The rally in the Boston
Common following the parade was jam-
packed. The bi networks had a table on a
main thoroughfare in the park, resulting in
more curious passersby and visitors than
ever. Thanks to all the
people who sat at the
table in the blazing sun.



PHOTO: EFRAIN J. GONZALEZ

DEADLINE for the

October/November issue:

Friday, September 13 at noon.

All submissions in writing, and please
include a name and phone number if
possible. If you do not want your name
published, please tell us! Otherwise we
will assume that you do not mind being
listed as a contributor. You may contribute
anonymously if you wish.

Send articles, calendar entries, letters, art,
news and views to:



BiWomen, BBWN
338 Newbury Street, 202C
Boston, MA 02115

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Letters

Dear BBWN:

I'm responding to your request for feedback about a Co-Ed Bisexual Network, described in your April/May issue.

I think it's a terrific idea.

The purpose as stated by Wayne

Bryant in the last paragraph connected with my needs and curiosities: "...to attract and energize bisexual people ... who might become more active in a mixed environment."

I feel the need for a co-ed network is implicit in the definition of bisexuality.

Fondly,

Sandra Katzman

✂ ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂

Dear Editors,

Your current issue (June/July 1991) contains some dangerous and inflammatory errors in an article on the 1991 Northampton Lesbian/Gay Pride March by Robyn Ochs.

Because I'm sure you are interested in presenting these delicate issues honestly, I am enclosing a letter which was sent to people who approached us, and who had heard many lies and misstatements as to the workings of the March Committee. I am also enclosing our press release, and a letter to community organizations which is referred to in the first letter.

When the actions of the "inclusive March committee" are made known — as they will be — perhaps your readers will be able to make up their own minds as to the fairness of the accusations against us.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Dreher, for the
1991 Lesbian/Gay
Pride March Committee

The full text of the letter follows:

May 6, 1991

Dear Friends,

We find it necessary to clarify some of the rumors (some innocent, some malicious and destructive) concerning the organizing of the 1991 Lesbian and Gay Pride March.

Last April, 1990, a large group of people met to discuss the fact that the name of the March had been returned to the original title of seven years' standing, the Lesbian and Gay Pride March. This action was accomplished during a series of meetings — well publicized by members of the community who felt strongly on

both sides of the issue. The votes taken were in the spirit of democratic process and were overwhelmingly in favor of retaining the title of Lesbian and Gay Pride March. Those angry about the loss of "bisexual" in the title organized a community meeting. At this meeting several groups made a promise to the group at large to initiate meetings to discuss and dissect the issue and take the pulse of the community (or at least that part of the community that attends meetings).

Eight months went by, and no one — not one of the groups who planned to initiate these meetings — took even a first step. No dialogue happened. We (those on this year's march committee) have asked time and time again why this failure of action, but have received no response.

As the months went by, a group of us who do other projects together and are personal friends, realized there would be no march at all if the permits were not secured. One of us, acting on her own and not as a member of any organized group, went to the police and the DPW and secured the permits. But no meetings occurred for six weeks or so. None of us were too excited about organizing a march, knowing that it takes a full-time commitment and we were all working on other projects. But when mid-March rolled around and no one had called even the first organizing meeting, we realized we would have to take responsibility if any work was to be done.

We quickly got the information into The Calendar (even though it was past the Calendar deadline, one of us is a typist for TC and stuck it in), called a few more folks from last year's committee, including the only man on the steering committee, and had a meeting. At this meeting we sent out a letter (included here) to thirteen gay, lesbian, and straight forums (including all local papers). There was very little time to organize a march. We felt there was no time for lengthy process discussions and were angry that people feeling a need to change the name waited until the last minute and took no responsibility for organizing.

All we saw was reaction, no action. This makes us question whether the purpose of this is to create or to destroy.

At the initial work meeting we were confronted (5 of us) by a group of men and women — predominantly members of Queer Nation — who refused to work on the march and demanded the title be changed. We knew rushed discussion would lead nowhere and felt extreme time pressure. We wanted a march we could be proud of. That night the march committee became 15 strong.

As it turned out, a variety of speakers and entertainers helped to create a diverse rally.

Letters continues on next page

✱
Send letters to:

BiWomen

BBWN

338 Newbury
Street, 202C

Boston, MA
02115

✱

Call for Papers

Papers on any aspect of bisexuality are sought for the next bisexual conference to be held in London in September.

All (positive) approaches to bisexuality are of interest: academic, political, personal, cross-cultural, historical, emotional. Any length of paper is welcome. No previous experience is needed: we want to expand the general area of discussion around bisexuality. People from traditionally marginalised groups are strongly encouraged to participate.

The closing date for sending in papers is **August 15th**.

For any further information, please contact Sue George at Conference Collective, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX, U.K.

Attention!

The 1st International Bisexual Conference will take place in Amsterdam, Holland on October 4 and 5, 1991, at the Vrije University.

Fritz Klein M.D., the Foreign Committee Chairman of the Conference's Coordination Group, writes, "I'm sure that this coming [conference] in Amsterdam will be both educational and exciting as all 11 Bisexual Dutch organizations are helping make sure that it will be highly successful. Let me know by letter, fax, or phone if you or anyone in your organization are interested in giving a talk or workshop at the conference so that we can put you on the program. Details as to costs (we expect them to be quite reasonable), exact times, place, and registration forms will be sent out later this spring. Also, let me know right away how many copies of the registration form you wish to distribute and I'll make sure they are sent to you."

He can be contacted at the following address and numbers:

1st International Bisexual Conference
Postbus 1406, 1000 BK
Amsterdam, Holland
Tel: (31-20)-627 7445
Fax: (31-20)-548 7502

Letters, from previous page

Lesbians, gay men, a bisexual woman and a heterosexual man all had a platform to air their views. And we marched, three thousand strong, on a beautiful day.

We are proud of the march we created and glad we were not intimidated into initiating discussions that should have begun last May, not 5 weeks before we celebrate a decade of Pride.

Contrary to rumors, all gays, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexuals were welcome (and felt welcomed) at every meeting. There was no official steering committee, and anyone who worked had a voice. And as you saw, all were welcome to march.

Press Release referred to in the above letter:

Work committees are now being formed for the 1991 Lesbian/Gay Pride March. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the March for Lesbian and Gay Rights in the Pioneer Valley. This year's theme is "Claiming Our Identity, Protecting Our Lives," and addresses the increasing physical and psychological violence against lesbians and gays. Anyone wishing to work on publicity, logistics, accessibility, program, peacekeeping, etc. can volunteer by writing to The March Committee, P.O. Box 1223, Northampton, MA 01061 or calling 586-0622 (leave message). All lesbians, gays, and supportive allies are welcome.

[For more information on the march, see pages 8 and 9 in this issue.]

Born That Way, from page 1

homosexual, which is ludicrous," he explained to anxious parents.

I hear the same sentiment in liberal circles everywhere. Even Dear Ann and Dear Abby agree: being gay is something a person has no more control over than race or gender. Therefore, it's unfair to deprive us of our rights.

The people who say these things are all on my side. But they make me very, very nervous.

For starters, I personally don't think I was "born this way." (In fact, when I'm feeling hostile, I've been known to tell right-wingers

that I'm a successfully "cured" hetero.) Until I was in my early thirties, I fell in love with men, took pleasure in sleeping with them, and even married one. But like most women, I experienced most of my closest emotional relationships with female friends. The only thing that made me different was that at some point I got curious about lesbian feminist claims that it was possible to combine that intense female intimacy with good sex. The good sex part turned out to be vastly easier than I anticipated. Even so, there was no immediate *biological* reason to stop having sex with men or to start living as a lesbian. Coming out was, for me, a conscious decision — every step of the way.

Nor am I an aberration, at least among women. Virtually every self-identified gay man I've ever met has been convinced that his sexuality is a biological given, but lesbians are a mixed bag. My own wildly unscientific estimate is that it's a pretty even split between the born lesbians and the born agains. We talk about these differences within the lesbian community (and we bitch about the other side of the born-again syndrome — women who choose to *stop* being lesbians and go off with men). But out in the Big World, it's invisibility as usual. The gay party line reflects the universal male experience, in this culture, not the complexities of the lesbian world.

Sexism? Probably. But the truth is that the "Born That Way" line has the public relations edge. At the root of a lot of homophobia is a fear that gayness is somehow contagious. If people really did fit into neat little either/or sexual pigeonholes from birth, no one would be able to say that gay teachers could possibly "recruit" their students. Parents of gays would be off the blame hook. Straights wouldn't have to feel threatened by passing queer attractions.

It seems like a quick-win strategy. But I suspect that it's shortsighted — and I'd say so even if it *didn't* ignore the experience of so many lesbians.

Remember when we got sucked into arguing not just about a woman's right to control her own body, but about whether the fetus was in fact a human being? We're making the same mistake here: letting the other side set the terms of this debate. The fundamentalists believe that being gay is definitely a matter of choice — specifically in a matter of choosing to sin. Instead of turning about and saying, "Get your church out from between my legs, pal," we've essentially thrown up our hands and said, "But we can't *help* being this way."

Inherent in that response is the implica-

Born That Way continues on next page

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Call for Essays on the Politics of Bisexuality

Bisexual activists Naomi Tucker and Brad Robinson are seeking essays for an anthology to examine how our sexuality and our politics have converged to form who we are and how we look at the world. This book is the next logical step in a progression of recently published bisexual anthologies. We want to collect the voices of women and men who are creating and defining bisexual politics. We especially encourage those whose voices have been traditionally silenced or censored to submit writing that speaks to your personal experience. Submissions can be sent on disk (Macintosh or IBM compatible), or as double-spaced, typewritten manuscripts, by November 1, 1991, to: Bisexual Politics; 584 Castro Street #136; San Francisco, CA 94114. For more information, contact Brad at 415-826-5788 or Naomi at 415-553-7725.

WANTED:

Housing (apartment or shared house) for woman and her two cats, anywhere in Boston or Cambridge; J.P., Allston, or South End preferred. Need to move in by September 1. Please call Laura at 894-5713.

Born That Way, from previous page

tion that if we *could* help it, we would. Even when that isn't what we mean, it's what a fair number of straight people hear, including some of our allies. It's easier for some of them to pity us as bearers of a genetic flaw than to respect us as sexual equals. Not challenging them might gain us some votes, but in the long run it means that we're subtly putting the word out that it's O.K. to regard us as sexually handicapped.

We're also staking our lives on scientific research that at the moment is a crapshoot. I recently saw a debate on a computer bulletin board about whether gay men should be allowed to serve as Boy Scout leaders. The homophobes trotted out the usual drivel about child abuse; the liberals argued back that gay people are born, not made; the homophobes countered with testimonials from various ministries claiming to "cure homosexuality"; the liberals answered that most of these supposed rehabilitations don't last. But what if scientists *do* find a biological "cure" someday? How many of us would really want to swallow that vaccine? What if they could identify a gay fetus through amniocentesis? Amusing as it is to contemplate *our* side waving giant photos of tiny (limp?) fetal wrists outside fundamentalist clinics, it really isn't that funny — or that farfetched.

Or what if they discover that there's *no* biological basis to sexual orientation? Are we willing to promise that on that day, we'll give back any gay rights we've managed to win and march off to the psychic showers?


I'd rather see us acquire some new political underpinnings. As inspiring as the civil rights and feminist struggles have been to most of us, I think we have to stop trying to fit gay rights onto the same grid. Every time we talk about race, gender, and sexual orientation in the same breath, we merely invite more tedious debate on whether gays are a "real" minority group or just people with an elective "lifestyle."

Instead, I'd like us to start referring *en masse* to another bedrock American liberty: the right to worship in the faith of one's choice. Through much of history, people have been forced to change their religions or to practice them underground. The United States was founded upon a rejection of such "solutions," and they're recognized as oppressive worldwide. The principle here is *freedom of expression*. It doesn't matter if you're a Jew or Quaker because your parents were, or if you converted as an adult. You're still protected.

Most of all, I want us to get off the defensive with all these tight-assed bigots. The we-can't-help-it argument is a cop-out. It pre-

tends that sex is something that white rats in a maze do because their hormones tell them to — not something humans do for fun. If there's anything we as feminists ought to be supporting, it's a frank, unapologetic celebration of sexual choice.

I'm personally for the right of happy heterosexuals to "experiment" with same-sex love and perhaps find that they like it. I'm for the right of bisexuals to opt for gay relationships, even though they don't have the excuse that they have no other choice. And I'm for the right of gay people to *choose* to act on their sexuality, whether society approves of it or not.

Ms. Subscriptions: P.O. Box 57131, Boulder, CO 80322-7131. \$45/yr. (6 issues). Editorial offices: 230 Park Ave., New York, NY 10169. 

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Rutgers Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference Precedent Challenged

There was an outcry among bi activists when, after the inclusion of the b-word for the first time at the "Fourth Annual Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Studies Conference" at Harvard last October, it was announced that the word 'bisexual' would be removed from this year's conference title. However, the precedent set by the Rutgers organizing committee for the "Fifth Annual Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference" in their decision to delete the b-word from the conference title may not be a precedent after all.

Swarthmore College has recently issued a call for papers for The Fourth Sager Symposium in Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Studies. This symposium is often used as a testing ground for the new theories presented at the larger academic conference. In addition to choosing an inclusive title, the organizers of the symposium have explicitly

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(to next page)

MADONNA – Like a What?

For years, Madonna has intrigued people of all genders and sexual orientations. From Like a Virgin to Hanky Panky, she has challenged stereotypes and social taboos surrounding sexuality.

Here is a small collection of excerpts we thought you'd enjoy.

This first one is from an interview that appeared earlier this year in the national lesbian/gay magazine The Advocate. The interviewer is Don Shewey.

Don Shewey: So when did you have your first sexual experience with a woman?

Madonna: Probably when I was about 7 or 8. All of my sexual experiences when I was young were with girls. I mean, we didn't have those sleep-over parties for nothing. I think that's really normal: same-sex experimentation. You get really curious, and there's your girlfriend, and she's spending the night with you, and it happens.

DS: Were you ever in love with a woman?

Madonna: I've had lots of crushes. I think I've only been in love with men, because ultimately the approval I seek is my father's.

DS: Why do lesbians adore you?

Madonna: I don't know. Why don't you go and ask them?

DS: How do you feel about them?

Madonna: Them? Them?

DS: It's interesting that there are all these stars gay men adore but for the most part gay women don't.

Madonna: What about Laura Nyro? There's k.d. lang, who's gorgeous, by the way. She looks like Sean [Penn]. I met her, and I thought, "Oh my God, she's the female version of Sean. I could fall in love with her."

DS: It's very rare for there to be a star like you who equally turns on gay men and gay women.

Madonna: Well, I'm an attractive girl.

DS: Is there a difference between the people

who want to brand powerful women as lesbians to discredit them and the ones who want to claim them for their own to validate themselves?

Madonna: So you're talking about what straight men do versus what gay women do? I know why straight men say of powerful women, "Oh, she's a dyke." It makes them feel safe to say, "They can't be women who like to fuck men, because I'm intimidated by them." I think gay women would want to claim me as their own because I am a really strong woman. I am assertive in a way that a lot of gay women are, and I could be a really good mascot for them or spokesperson or something.

A long article appeared in Vanity Fair magazine in April 1990. For those of you who missed it, here are some choice bits:

Much of Madonna's "bad" behavior is simply what some would consider vulgar, and can be traced to her exploits with [Sandra] Bernhard. Whether staging belching contests at restaurants or coyly going into [Warren] Beatty's bedroom at his Fourth of July party and donning his underwear before going for a dip in his pool in front of all the other guests, the two of them love to push the boundaries of polite etiquette.

"I think that's why she likes Sandra so much," says one of the girls who hung out [with Madonna] for a while. "She can be totally obnoxious with her and not worry about being a star. I think she sort of looks up to Sandra. To put it bluntly, though, sometimes when they're together they can be a nightmare."

Some claim that Sean Penn became jealous of the closeness that Madonna and Sandra share and that Sandra was jealous of Sean's own relationship with Madonna. The tension supposedly hastened the divorce. "I'd say that my friendship with Sandra was just beginning as my relationship with Sean was dying," says Madonna. "So, of course, anybody that would be close with me would be a threat to Sean, who felt that he was losing me. It wasn't just Sandra — it could have been anybody, really. I don't think Sandra was ever jealous of Sean — it was just a question of her seeing that I was really in pain, and saying, 'What the fuck are you doing to yourself?'"

Bernhard is open about her own lesbian affairs, so the question that everybody asks is: Were she and Madonna ever lovers?

"I can tell you for a fact they are just friends," says [an ex-cohort].

"Sure, Sandra's very open. But this is another example of my throwing the stereotypes at you,"

Madonna continues on next page



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(from previous page)

encouraged submissions of studies pertaining to bisexuality. Advisory committee member Danny Smartt said of the move, "We took a good look at the issues surrounding the Rutgers conference and [the committee] decided a statement needed to be made."

The Sager Symposium, subtitled "Constructions of Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Identities in Popular Media," will be held March 27-29, 1992, at Swarthmore College. The range of topics is expected to be expansive and not limited to contemporary American culture. Papers on bisexual identities are especially encouraged. Send abstracts to: Sager Fund advisory committee, c/o Daniel Smartt, Art Dept., Swarthmore College, 500 College Ave., Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397. Deadline: Nov. 20, 1991.

— Reported in Bi•Focus, a newsletter for Philadelphia's bisexual community. Subscriptions and editorial offices: P.O. Box 30372, Philadelphia, PA 19103. \$12/year (4 issues).



Madonna, from previous page

says Madonna. "I was in New York doing *Speed-the-Plow* and she was doing her own show downtown. We were both stuck there for the summer. Sean was in Thailand doing *Casualties of War*. I had a lot of evenings free and so we just started hanging out, slagging everybody off together. She was just what I needed. We became really good friends. Then she asked me to go on the David Letterman show. I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Because I have that in-your-face attitude — and so does she — I had no idea going on the show together was going to be perceived as what it was perceived as. Then we realized it, it seemed like everybody in America was in an uproar."

But on that show Bernhard facetiously confessed to having slept with both Sean and Madonna. And Madonna told the nation that the two of them hung out in a Greenwich Village bar known as the Cubby Hole. Why wouldn't America be in an uproar? "I've never been to the Cubby Hole. That's the joke of it. My brother lives around the corner and I've walked by it with him and I'd sort of go, 'Oh, yeah, look, there's a lesbian club.' Sandra and I were just fucking with people. But then when I realized the reaction we had gotten, I of course couldn't leave that alone. So Sandra and I decided to tease everybody. Then, of course, it got out of hand and I didn't want to do it anymore, because it was more important for me to have a friendship. But we had our fun with that and it sort of worked itself to death." ▼



Rosanne Beaurivage
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BiNet, from page 1

Among the decisions made:

- The name of the network (which has informally existed for about 5 years) was changed to reflect the fact that Hawaii is not necessarily seen as part of North America, while Mexico and Canada have not been represented or were underrepresented (no representatives from Canada or Mexico were at the conference in Seattle). "Multicultural" was removed from the name because it is part of the general statement of purposes agreed upon at the previous conference and because its inclusion in the name was seen as excluding concerns of other oppressed groups.

- The network mailing address will continue to be 584 Castro Street, Box #441, San Francisco, CA 94114-2588.

- For the next 2 years, the East Coast Bisexual Network will continue to produce the International Directory of Bisexual Groups (published every October and April, now 24 pages long, and containing approximately 150 groups), and BiNet will assume the responsibility for producing the directory by the end of that time.

- A quarterly newsletter will be published in the middle of February, May, August and November, containing group and network news, upcoming bi events, tips on organizing, and listing various print/video/audio/etc. resources. A newsletter work group was created.

- A task force was created to find a sponsoring group and location for next year's conference.

- A National Task Force on Bisexuals and HIV was also created.

- BiNet endorsed and will promote bi visibility and participation in the annual gay/lesbian National Coming Out Day, October 11.

- The network will also promote the organizing at local levels of a Bisexual Visibility Day ("Bi Out Day"), to be held Friday, February 14, 1992 — Valentine's Day.

- The conference was organized by members of the Seattle Bisexual Men's Union and the Bay Area Bisexual Network, and held at the Pilgrim Congregational Church, where a fundraiser dance for BiNet and SBMU was also held Saturday night.

The Network is a non-partisan clearinghouse for information about bisexuality, facilitates communication among the many bi groups throughout the United States and supports local group development. While the network does not take political stands, such as endorsing candidates and legislation, it supports the liberation struggles of oppressed people and promotes education about and awareness of bisexual people, groups and communities, and promotes bi visibility.

— contributed by Laura Sachs ▼

Northampton Shines Despite Stormy Protests

There has been quite a lot of talk about this year's Lesbian/Gay Pride March in Northampton, MA. In response to an article by Robyn Ochs (*BiWomen* June/July 1991), Sarah Dreher, a speaker at Northampton's Pride Rally and one of the march's organizers, has written to *BiWomen* (see p.3). In this letter she presents her story and urges us to decide for ourselves the accuracy of accusations made against this year's march organizers. So that you may have a more complete picture of Northampton's march and celebration, we've included some photos

of that day (taken by Beth Grace, a lesbian who attended the March and Rally), as well as the text of Sarah Dreher's speech made at the rally (see opposite page).

— Sue S.

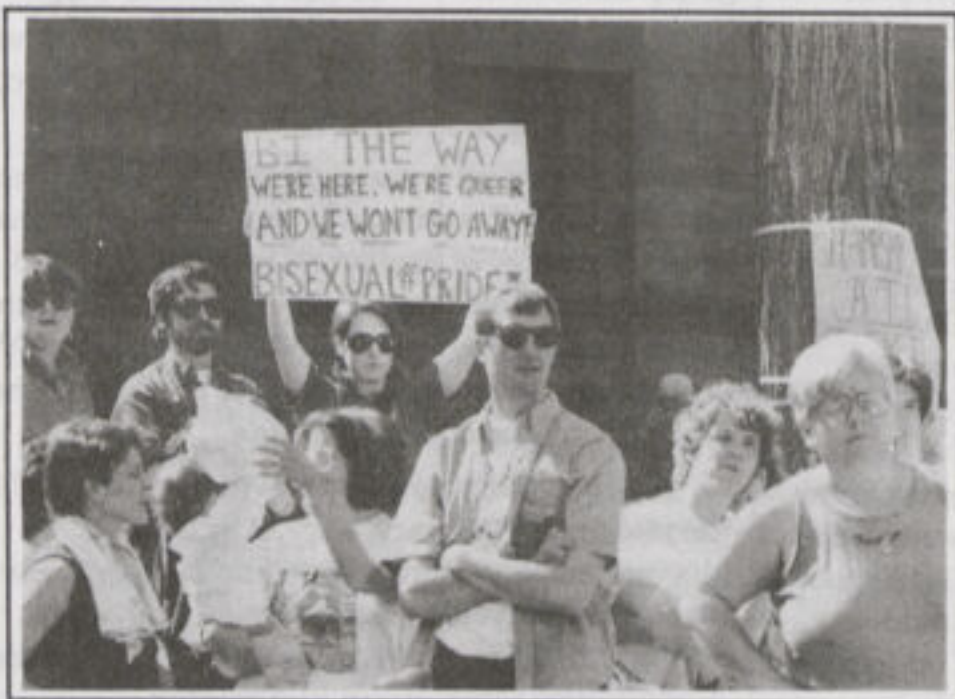


PHOTO: BETH GRACE

One of the signs held up during Sarah Dreher's speech at the Rally in Pulaski Park.



PHOTO: BETH GRACE

A couple blows bubbles during the Rally.



PHOTO: BETH GRACE

Amherst selectwoman Elisa Campbell came out last year as bisexual. She spoke at the Rally in Pulaski Park.



PHOTO: BETH GRACE

Laura Silver, a bisexual, is comforted by her partner as she listens to Sarah Dreher's speech.



PHOTO: BETH GRACE

One of the March organizers, Leslie Jennings, stands as Sarah Dreher addresses the crowd.



PHOTO: BETH GRACE

An official peacekeeper tells Liz Brooks (one of the March Committee members who opposed changing the name of the march to include bisexuals) that she must move — she blocked the Queer Nation contingent from marching by standing in front of them. Queer Nation Western Mass. was one of the organizers of the Committee for an All-Inclusive March. Her sign says "Lesbian Power — Keep it Close" — perhaps she accidentally left out the letter "d".

The following appeared in the Northampton publication The Calendar. It is reprinted here in its entirety.

Many of us were unable to hear Sarah Dreher's speech at the Lesbian and Gay Pride March this year, mostly because a group of self-identified bisexuals shouted throughout her talk. TC is proud to print it as a service to our Lesbian readers and to Sarah, who, as a respected community member and elder, deserves to be treated

with respect, whether people agree with her or not. I would like to thank the March Committee for their excellent hard work. This was the best March ever, and the speakers at the rally really reflected ALL members of this coalition, including the Young and the Rude. And now, for those who missed it, Sarah's speech:

This is one of the oldest, largest and strongest Lesbian communities in the country. Do you know how crazy that makes some people? I found out how crazy when when I made a decision to work on the March Committee.

The quality and quantity of instant hate and rage directed toward us was bewildering and frightening, and far out of proportion to the issues. We were called "divisive" — by a group of people who, the previous year, had denied any Lesbian the opportunity to speak at the rally. We were accused of "splitting the community." We were called "separatists" by people so ignorant of Lesbian politics that they didn't even understand that a Lesbian separatist would never work on a Lesbian/Gay Pride March, only on a Lesbian Pride March. So ignorant they didn't realize that a separatist is a Lesbian who devotes all possible resources to the good of her Lesbian community. So ignorant they don't understand that many of us consider "separatist" not an insult, but a term of honor.

And yet these people claim the right to define our community and tell us what we need and what is important to us. It makes them crazy, all right. Crazy enough to engage in a campaign of lies, disinformation, childish name-calling, and manipulation all designed to undermine our march and discredit our community. Crazy enough to label us "Lesbian fascists from Hell" and encourage violence against us.

Something's going on here, and it's bigger than a name. Something that strikes at the very heart of our lesbian community.

The real issue is homophobia — a new kind of homophobia. Homophobia that is also misogyny, and is directed specifically against Lesbians. Lesbophobia so deep they mockingly call last year's rally "The Lesbian Hour", even though the program was precisely balanced between male and female speakers and entertainers. Lesbophobia so deep they saw only Lesbians. Misogyny so deep that nothing is relevant to them unless it comes out of a male mouth. Lesbophobia so profound that they are even willing to use the gay, bisexual, and heterosexual communities to destroy what we are trying to create. Lesbophobia so deep that they are willing to do anything, to abandon any vestige of honor or dignity in their fear and hatred of Lesbians. Lesbian-hating so deep they did everything in their power to undermine a march for the benefit of the entire Lesbian/Gay community, because Lesbians made up the majority of the committee and did the majority of the work. And then they turned around and "made nice" to the straight press, all in the name of "unity".

Why is this happening now?

Every group fighting for its civil rights reaches a choice point. A point that arises when they begin to attain power. A split occurs between those who want to "assimilate" into the mainstream culture, and those who don't want to lose their unique identity. We are at that point now. This is an issue which we must decide within our own Lesbian community and in each of our hearts. It is also an issue that is being exploited by a group of people who want to use it to undermine our Lesbian power and conceal our Lesbian identity.

This is not to deny the bisexual issue. It is a real one, and one that we have to consider with all seriousness before we are rushed into making a decision. Some of us feel that bisexuals are a part of our community because they are oppressed for their sexual choices. Some of us feel it takes a lot more than sexual oppression to be a community.

An important question, yes, but also a smoke screen. Those people who want to weaken the Lesbian community have found a perfect way to do it. They've found an issue about which many of us feel ambivalent, and used that issue to try to make us feel guilty and mean-spirited.

In the Lesbophobic rhetoric, "assimilation" is called "inclusion" and "unity". "Inclusion" and "unity". Pretty words. Sort of like "freedom" and "justice". You're some kind of freak if you don't support them. Those who espouse "inclusion" would have you believe it means we're all alike, with the same experiences and priorities. One big happy family here in Happy Valley.

But let me tell you what "inclusion" also means. It means concealing our Lesbian identity behind a meaningless catchword. It means a denial of our uniqueness, of our cultural and historical heritage. It means "speakers bureaus", from which anyone — Lesbian, gay, bisexual, even heterosexual persons — can go out to various groups and "speak for" anyone else. A heterosexual or bisexual woman or man can speak for you, and talk about what it means to be you. A married couple with a gay son can tell other heterosexuals what your life is like.

Let me give you some examples: (these are actual, witnessed examples, things that really happened just [within] the past year)

A woman from a speakers bureau told a mixed audience "Most of the Lesbians I know sleep with men". Is this woman speaking for you? She isn't speaking for me. Another speaker stated: "No real Lesbian would do S/M." They sure seem like "real Lesbians" to me. It means heterosexuals who say they "came out", meaning they told another heterosexual they knew someone who was gay. I find that demeaning to those of us who struggled, suffered, lost friends and jobs and children and even parents when we finally found the courage to proclaim our Lesbianism.

It means a Lesbian/Gay Pride March called instead (as one heterosexual couple suggested last year) "The Pride March", or "The Sexual Freedom March" or "The Diversity March". Where is your name in that? Why not call the St. Patrick's Day March the "Ethnic March"? Why not combine all the marchers in the country into one huge march and just call it "The March"?

It means — as is happening at some area colleges — no more women-only dances, because bisexual women want to share important parts of their lives with their male significant others. It means non-Lesbians deciding our political agenda — telling us what we need and want. Like the heterosexual couple who last year demanded to be on the decision-making board for the March — to decide for you what issues the March would address.

Well I'm not ready to give up my Lesbian power or my Lesbian identity just because someone tries to guilt-trip me with pretty words. These people would have you believe that we insult bisexuals when we assert Lesbian identity. When my black friends say "Black is beautiful", I don't think they're saying "White is ugly." When I say "Lesbian is beautiful," I'm not saying "Bisexual is ugly," or "heterosexual is ugly" or "asexual is ugly." I'm only saying "Lesbian is beautiful."

They have redefined the oppressed as the oppressors. They have tried to make Lesbians the villains in bisexuals' struggle for liberation. They would have you say, "I'm not a lesbian, I'm a person." And thereby deny your Lesbian heritage.

They would erase our politics, our special outlook on life, our identity. They would have you say "We're all alike except for who we sleep with," and thereby reduce all our issues to sexual issues.

And what have we done to call forth this anger? We have been strong. We have built a center of Lesbian power that is recognized and admired across the country. And we've done it without men. We worked hard to establish this community.

How many of you remember Lesbian Gardens at the Northampton Women's Center? The Common Woman Restaurant? The Gala? The Greasy Gorgon Garage? Dyke Doings? Lilith? The Egg? Liberty Standing? These things belonged to our community, and were created by Lesbians who were willing to struggle and work. We didn't always agree with one another, but we fought battles and did our work and we established a real, visible Lesbian presence in Northampton.

But we got tired, and burned out, and had to rest. And while we rested these things slipped away from us, because there was no one who wanted to pick up the torch.

Well, it's time to pick up the torch. Our battles aren't all won. We must insist on setting our own political agendas. We must define our terms and issues for ourselves. We need domestic partnership laws to legalize our relationships, so homophobic relatives can't make medical decisions for us when we can't make them for ourselves. We need a more active pursuit of our rights to have and raise children, and reform of health insurance and tax laws.

The Northampton Police Department has assigned one officer to follow up on our reports of harassment and Lesbian-bashing. That same officer is responsible for tracking down and prosecuting Lesbian activists. We [must] make the police aware of the inappropriateness of this. We must put a stop to the harassment of Lesbian women on the streets of Northampton. We must insist that the police prosecute those who would try to intimidate us. We have rights and we must claim them.

We need a community center, an accessible space in which matters of political and community interest are discussed among ourselves. I don't want to hear anyone say — as someone from the University community said to last year's March Committee, "We already discussed it and decided. Why are you even bothering to discuss it again?" But we can't pick up a phone and reserve [a] room in the Campus Center every time we need to have a meeting. We have to plan weeks, even months in advance, and find and pay for space. We need a new, accessible Lesbian Gardens.

THE CALENDAR does a good job of providing us with information, but we need a Lesbian newsletter that can serve as a forum for discussion about ourselves. We need a speaker's bureau from which Lesbians can go out and speak for Lesbians.

We can take control of our own lives.

We can watch for announcements of events where people are speaking about "Lesbianism" or any of our issues. We can attend these lectures and [demand] to know the speaker's sexual orientation and authority to speak for us. [If] things are said that we don't agree with, we can make [it] plain that [these] speakers don't speak for us.

We can work at raising our own political consciousness so that we [can] recognize threats from outside our community and be prepared to deal [with] them. So that we can discuss controversial issues and make informed decisions, not just jump to conclusions based on name-calling and [posters] tacked to laundromat walls.

We can refuse to believe the rumors we hear about our sisters until we have had a chance to check the truth of these rumors. We can support existing community organizations like F.L.O.W.E.R.: Theater, Too; Amherst-Northampton Lesbian Festival, and all our Lesbian businesses, artists, and performers; and work to create new Lesbian businesses and cultural institutions.

There are threats to our community, and we have to be prepared to [deal] with them. But we can't let those threats constantly sap our energy so we have none left to give our community. We have to decide — each of [us] — when to fight, and when to disengage. Our overriding goal must be to create, not destroy.

I'd like to end on a personal note.

I knew I was "different" when I was 10-years old. I was able to ["come] out" — thanks to the support of the Women's Movement and my straight and Lesbian sisters — when I was 35. That's 25 years, nearly half my life. 25 years of self-hatred. 25 years of fear and hiding, and believing I could never have real friends, because they might "guess". Believing I could never have real love, because that love was dirty and forbidden. 25 years before I could take the first tentative steps, could begin to say "I'm not so bad after all," "maybe I don't have to be alone, after all." 25 years. And I've spent more than 20 years learning what it is to be a Lesbian — to be a strong, woman-loving woman.

So when you try to tell me I'm "just like everyone else," I say NO! I'm unique, and I cherish my uniqueness. I am a Lesbian, and I see the world through Lesbian eyes.

I am Lesbian, and I am strong.

I am Lesbian, and I am loving.

I am Lesbian, and I am beautiful.

I am Lesbian.

Hello? Are You There, Phil?

Intro by Kathleen H.

On May 14, 1991, well-known talk-show host Phil Donahue explored yet another hot topic: "The Difference Between Men and Women from People Who Have Slept with Both." Perhaps I was naive. I thought it would be an interesting show. It turned out to be a circus. At times, one could hardly hear the questions and the responses amid the laughter. It's amazing how many people cannot deal with the subject of sexuality. Mr. Donahue did not do very well in keeping the show under control, and, in my opinion, seemed to encourage the circus atmosphere. I was not amused.

The guests were Susie "Sexpert" Bright, editor of On Our Backs, the lesbian sex magazine; Philip Gifter, a writer who identifies as gay, but has occasionally been involved with women; a formerly gay, born-again Christian man; and the man's pregnant wife. Here are some excerpts from the show, as recorded by Journal Graphics (a full transcript can be obtained by sending \$3 to Journal Graphics, Inc., 267 Broadway, New York, NY 10007. Request Phil Donahue Show #0514-91, Transcript #3205, Subject: The Difference Between Men and Women from People Who Have Slept with Both).

This first excerpt is the very opening of the show. Hang on.

No Experience Necessary...

Volunteers are needed to staff the BBWN office at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Monday evenings. Can you spare one Monday a month? An occasional Monday? To volunteer, call (617) BIS-MOVE and leave a message for Stephanie.

Donahue: Who make better lovers, men or women? Women?

1st Audience Member (F): Why?

Donahue: Why? Huh?

1st Audience Member (F): Because they have more brains.

Donahue: But who did you say? Women make better lovers?

1st Audience Member (F): Yeah.

Donahue: Yeah. You agree?

2nd Audience Member (F): Yeah.

Donahue: Yes. Yeah.

3rd Audience Member (F): I think women are more sensitive.

Donahue: Oh, aren't you just too good to be true! Susie Bright, are you — is she right? You are a — what are you Susie? You're — (crosstalk) Are you a bisexual or is that — you don't like this word, "bisexual"?

Susie Bright: I've enjoyed relationships with both men and women and both can be

sensitive, but women tend to think that sensitivity is a top priority coming into sex, right off the bat. And sometimes I wish women were a little less concerned about whether they're coming across sensitive or not. And with men, sometimes I'm wishing — I wish they would think of that first.

Donahue: Yeah. So it stands to reason, then, that two women — if a woman is more sensitive, two women would be doubly sensitive with each other?

Susie Bright: I know. You've got to watch out for that.

Donahue: Well, it's not likely a problem I'm going to encounter, at least in this life. But the point — do you agree? Is it necessarily true — do I understand you to say that two women don't necessarily have any need for foreplay? Did you say that?

Susie Bright: Well, in lesbian sex—

Donahue: I'm sorry. You said it. You said it.

4th Audience Member (F): What do you mean, no foreplay for women?

Donahue: Well, I — this is not — I didn't say this. Did you want to talk to this?

Susie Bright: I would say that foreplay isn't in the lesbian sexual vocabulary because for women, everything you do might lead to orgasm. There is no one big event, the penis-vagina event. It could be anything could lead to orgasm and so what could be foreplay? If I caress you here, that might — who knows how excited you might get by that. I might move to another place on your body and it's not foreplay. It could be the most exciting thing that's happening.

Donahue: Oh, this is going to be a long show. I think I understand. Did you understand that?

5th Audience Member (F): Well, I didn't understand that, but I'm wondering if —

Donahue: Well, wait a minute, now. If you don't understand it —

5th Audience Member (F): Let me ask a question. Is love between two men than two women more intense? It seems that love between men seems to be so intense until — do you understand what I'm saying?

Donahue: I think I do, and that concerns me, that I understand what you said. Philip Gifter joins us. You're a freelance writer and novelist. You are predominantly gay, it says here.

Philip Gifter, Writer/Novelist: That is true.

Donahue: Predominantly gay.

Philip Gifter: That is true.

Donahue: So we're talking you know, 70-30?

Donahue continued on next page

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Personal Politics

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personal life
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upward
With tears streaming
down her face
In privatized pain,
Even among activists or
In my tiny world I
Move with caution
Expecting enemies and
so proceed
With shield thrust
forward
Bearing the crest
Of camouflage or
rhetoric
The shell covering the
Tender meat
underneath.
My father's purple heart
is empty
But I am dissolving the
guard
To my unseen wounds
Feeling that my life will
Make a statement
By its nature.

by [REDACTED] 11/90



Donahue, from previous page

I don't know. What —

Philip Geftter: Ninety-five, five. I don't know.

Donahue: Right, so if John Wayne is 12 noon and Madonna is 6:30, you're sort of a quarter to five, is that right?

Philip Geftter: According to that metaphor, I guess.

Donahue: All right. What was the question? What was the question?

* * *

6th Audience Member (M): Psychological tests have shown that bisexuals tend to favor homosexual stimuli as opposed to heterosexual. How do you feel —

Donahue: No kidding. How do you know this?

6th Audience Member (M): Oh, from my psychobiology class.

Donahue: So this is — they're teaching this in school? We are going to hell if they're teaching this in school.

6th Audience Member (M): I go to a Catholic University, as well.

Donahue: At a Catholic University? Let me understand your question, now. You're saying that the research shows — and I don't want to dismiss your question because obviously there's a lot of scholarship on this and sexuality is, after all, a feature of being human. So hurray for those who study this against a lot of pressure not to. Bisexuals are more likely to be erotically stimulated in a homosexual encounter than in a heterosexual encounter?

6th Audience Member (M): Exactly. How do you feel about —

Donahue: Do you agree with the premise?

Philip Geftter: Well, see, I don't consider myself a bisexual. I consider myself a homosexual who has, on occasion, been attracted to and involved with women and I think that's a really important distinction. I think we're all ostensibly bisexual, but we all have our own preferences.

Donahue: No!

Philip Geftter: Yeah.

Donahue: We're all bisexual? We've got a young male in the back row — no, no. You don't want anybody saying that about you. I'll give you a chance in a moment. Now, wait a minute! I feel a speech coming from him.

* * *

6th Caller (F): Hi. Bisexuality is a cop-out. Heterosexual privilege is a reality. People are bisexual in name because they reap — they're hoping to reap the privileges of heterosexual-

ity. Homosexuality exists in nature. God created homosexuality for a reason. The population explosion — there are millions of reasons why homosexuality exists. People claim to be bisexual because they long for heterosexual privilege and religion is one of the things that they use to shame people to come out.

Susie Bright: Thank you for the political speech.

Donahue: But I'm not sure I understand its consequences. What troubles her about bisexuality?

Susie Bright: The consequences are, is that there's two —

Donahue: What do you think — how do you feel about homosexuals?

6th Caller (F): I think that they're naturally homosexual or naturally heterosexual.

Donahue: And you don't bring a judgement to either person?

6th Caller (F): No. I think that you have to stop straddling the fence and grow up.

Donahue: So she's not homophobic. She's anti-bisexual. She thinks that's a kind of little number we do on ourselves. I should say that — you don't seem to be altogether thrilled about identifying yourselves as bisexual.

Philip Geftter: That's correct for me.

* * *

30th Audience Member (F): Yes, I'd like to know, which do you prefer, since you just had a baby. I'd like to know if you prefer men or women.

Susie Bright: Well, you're not going to get me to say which I prefer and that's because if I asked you your favorite things to eat or the most beautiful places you've ever been or the — or who was your favorite person in the family, you would probably say "Well, I love so-and-so because they could get to me on a certain level that no one else could."

* * *

Donahue: Are you there caller? I'm almost out of time.

9th Caller (F): Yes, Phil. I think you just have a bunch of —

(End of the show)

* * *



CALENDAR

THE CENTER
is the Lesbian and Gay
Community Center, 338
Newbury Street, Suite 202C,
Boston, MA 02115.

Ongoing Events:



Sundays:

Alateen Group open to bisexual, lesbian and gay youth 22 and under who are affected by alcoholism in a family member or a close friend. 6pm. At the Center.



Mondays:

Bisexual Alcoholics Anonymous. 7:30-8:30pm, Mass. General Hospital, under Amphitheater (go past the Lower Amphitheater, take stairs up 3 flights). Closed speaker-discussion. Info: leave message for Ingrid at (617) 641-3281.



Tuesdays:

Bisexual Women's Rap Group. 7:30pm-10pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Central Square, Cambridge, MA. All women welcome. Call (617) 354-6658 for more info.



Wednesdays:

Bisexual Children of Alcoholics. 7:30pm. An Al-Anon meeting for bisexual children of alcoholics. Mass. General Hospital, lower amphitheater (next to the emergency room entrance), Boston, MA. Call Marge at (617) 259-1559 for more info.

August 4 ◆ Sunday

Bi Space, 8pm. A place for bisexual people to meet and talk. No agenda or set topic. Suggested donation \$2. Sponsored by the East Coast Bisexual Network. At The Center. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

August 4 ◆ Sunday

W.O.W.: Way Out in Waltham. Watch City's Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group goes to Watch City Folk Festival. Noon to 6pm at Gore Place, 52 Gore St., Waltham. Info: (617) 893-0361 or (617) 893-0742.

August 5 ◆ Monday

BBWN Introductory Meeting, 7:30pm. A safe place for women who want to learn more about bisexuality — myths, theories, experiences — and to connect with the bi community. All women welcome! At the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, Mass.

August 9-16 ◆ Friday-Friday

International Women's Writing Guild Conference at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY. Info: Hanelore Hahn at (212) 737-7536.



August 13-18 ◆ Tues.-Sun.

The 6th Annual Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. Near Hart, Michigan. 3- to 6-day tickets cost between \$110-\$210. Info: (616) 757-4766.

August 15 ◆ Thursday

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Speakers Bureau meeting, 8-10pm. At The Center. Info: (617) 354-0133.

August 17-24 ◆ Saturday-Saturday

Maine Camping Trip to Acadia National Park. Sponsored by Connecticut Women Outdoors. Info: Deb at (203) 742-687, or Michelle at (413) 586-0562.

August 17 ◆ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Bi Brunch. At Montilio's, 549 Boylston St. (Copley Square), Boston. Nearest MBTA stop: Copley, on the Green line. Meet outside at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

August 17 ◆ Saturday

W.O.W. (see Aug. 4) goes to Crane's Beach for fun, picnic and business meeting. 9am. Info: (617) 893-0361 or (617) 893-0742.

August 19 ◆

Monday

New Mixed-Gender Bisexual Network general meeting, 8-10pm at The Center. For anyone interested in helping to create a co-ed network.

A co-ed bisexual network in Boston is beginning to form (see *BiWomen* June/July 1991, page 2). If you are interested, be sure to attend this general meeting.

August 30-September 2 ◆ Friday-Monday

North East Women's Musical Retreat in Hardwick, Mass. Tenting, cabins, music, crafts, videos, games, swimming and much more. Info: SASE to NEWMR, P.O. Box 550, Branford, CT 06405.

September 1 ◆ Sunday

Bi Space, 8pm (see August 4).

September 16 ◆ Monday

BBWN Coordinating Committee Meeting, 8-10pm. All women welcome. Help guide the Network, share the load. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

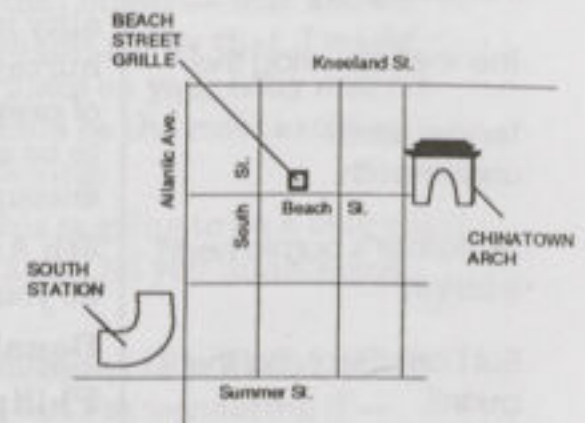


September 19 ◆ Thursday

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Speakers Bureau meeting, 8-10pm. At The Center. Info: (617) 354-0133.

September 21 ◆ Saturday

BBWN/BBMN Monthly Bi Brunch. At Beach Street Grille, 105 Beach Street. Nearest T stop: South Station on the Red line. Walk about three blocks south-ish down Atlantic Ave. (towards Kneeland St.), take right onto Beach Street. The place is up two blocks on your left. From the Chinatown Arch, walk two blocks up Beach Street away from Chinatown (towards Atlantic Ave.). The place is on your right. Good food, cheap. We'll have a room of our own, upstairs from the main area. Meet outside at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.



September 30

◆ Monday

BBWN Volunteer Night. Help stuff the Oct./Nov. BiWomen newsletter! See old friends, make new friends. It's truly a lot of fun, plus you get to read BiWomen hot off the press! 6-10pm at The Center. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

October 7 ◆ Monday

BBWN Introductory Meeting (see August 5).

October 11 ◆ Friday

National Coming Out Day!!!!

November 9-11 ◆ Saturday-Monday

Fourth Annual Creating Change Conference. A national conference for lesbian and gay organizing and skill-building. Organized by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Info: Creating Change 1991, NGLTF Policy Institute, 1734 14th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009-4309 or call (202) 332-6483.

Bi Women

The Newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network

Promote Bi Visibility

**National
Coming Out Day
October 11, 1991**

**National
Bi Visibility Day
February 14, 1992**

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Thinking About Community

What Do We Want?

By Stephanie Berger

In the beginning of the summer I co-facilitated the first of two planned Bi Community meetings, along with Wayne Bryant of the Boston Bisexual Men's Network. The basic premise of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of creating a mixed-gender network. Thirty people attended the discussion, with roughly equal numbers of women and men participating. As a facilitator, I felt that before we could even have a discussion about a mixed-gender network we needed to talk about *community* – a bisexual community in Boston, OUR community. What do we want and how

Community continues on page 6

The first issue of the BiNet Newsletter has appeared, and it looks great! It's 12 pages of news about BiNet: The Bisexual Network of the USA – including meeting notes from the 1991 BiNet Seattle Conference; a brief history of the national network; as well as other interesting articles and announcements.

Fill out and send in the form on page 11 to begin getting your own copies of BiNet.

The following call for materials is from the first issue of the BiNet Newsletter.

Call for Materials

The BiNet Newsletter needs more information from bisexual communities all over the USA. BiNet's purpose is the collection and distribution of information to members of the bisexual community in the USA. We are committed to regional, age, class, racial, religious, ability, size, and ethnic diversity, and to gender balance. We are here to help increase bi visibility and understanding.

Send any information, news or announcements to our box, attn: Newsletter.

Information is being gathered on:

- How to start a bisexual group – social, support or political
- Multicultural/Multiethnic outreach techniques
- HIV/AIDS in the bisexual community
- How to organize a conference – local, topical or national
- Campus organizing
- Organizing political action
- Media work

BiNet will produce information packets on these topics. Please send any information to BiNet. In addition, a packet on Public Speaking

BiNet continues on page 11

BBWN News

Honor Roll

♥

Susan R.
 Laura S.
 Gail Z.
 Sharon G.
 Claire M.
 Robyn O.
 Patrice
 [REDACTED]
 Michelle
 Ginny L.
 Gabe L.
 Laura P.
 Stephanie B.
 Kathleen H.
 Susan S.
 Ann G.
 Laura W.

BiWomen is published
 bi-monthly, of course.

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Send your business-card sized ad
 and a check to:

BiWomen, c/o BBWN
 338 Newbury Street, 202C
 Boston, MA 02115

Sach a deal!

Bi All Over

There are some big events happening
 around the world over these next few months.

- The Ninth British Bisexual Confer-
 ence was September 20-22. We hope
 our local friends who went will tell
 us all about it – in the form of an
 article for the next issue of
 BiWomen, perhaps?
- The First International Bisexual
 Conference will take place in Am-
 sterdam, Holland, on October 4-5.
 Again, we hope to hear about it from
 those who go.
- The Fourth Annual Creating Change
 Conference – a National Conference
 for Gay and Lesbian Organizing and
 Skills Building – will be held
 November 9-11 at the Old Colony
 Inn, Alexandria, Virginia. The
 conference is produced by the
 National Gay and Lesbian Task
 Force Policy Institute. For more info
 call them at (202) 332-6483. (See
 related article, page 8.)



The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

BBWN Financial Statement 1/1/91 through 6/30/91

Balance forward 1/1/91: \$ 3,803.20

Expenses:

Postage	775.14
Printing	1,233.25
Phone	77.30
Supplies	108.19
Merchandise	239.00
Advertising	35.00
Taxes pd.	56.00

2,493.88

Income:

Dues/subscriptions	946.00
Ad. revenue	60.00
Merchandise sold	210.35
Interest	83.74
Misc.	2.16

1,302.25

Balance as of 6/30/91: \$ 2,611.57

[Submitted by Robyn Ochs, Treasurer]

Congratulations ECBN!

Woody Glenn's hard work of grant proposal
 writing has paid off! The Polaroid Foundation
 of Cambridge, Mass., has recently awarded
 the East Coast Bisexual Network a \$1,000
 grant designated for general operating sup-
 port of the Boston Bisexual Resource Office
 (located in the Center). Many thanks to
 Woody!

DEADLINE for the
 December 1991/January 1992 issue:
Friday, November 8 at noon.

All submissions in writing, and please
 include a name and phone number if
 possible. **If you do not want your name
 published, please tell us!** Otherwise we
 will assume that you do not mind being
 listed as a contributor. **You may contribute
 anonymously if you wish.**

Send articles, calendar entries, letters, art,
 news and views to:

BiWomen, BBWN
 338 Newbury Street, 202C
 Boston, MA 02115

Letters

Hi —

Please send me a subscription to "Bi Women," as mentioned in Bisexuality — A Reader and a Sourcebook. It's wonderful to know that there is an emerging bisexual movement —

although in some ways it's sad that it has to be separate from the gay/lesbian movement. I once went to a discussion group at my college that advertised itself as being for "lesbians and those who are questioning," or some such phrase, which I naively took to be a code-word for bisexuals. I was wrong. I met with thinly-veiled hostility, an experience which, according to the aforementioned book, seems to be quite typical. I was quite shocked about this — I had assumed that politically, at least, bisexuality and lesbianism were basically the same thing and that erotically, they existed on a continuum. I hope that the future will bring more acceptance of bisexuality in both the hetero- and homosexual communities. I look forward to receiving your newsletter, and perhaps even getting up to Boston one of these days to attend an event.

Thanks — enclosed is \$16.00.

Milford, CT

Dear Robyn,

Enclosed is the first issue of Bifrost, our new national newsletter for bisexuals in Great Britain. We will be going out monthly, and judging from the interest we've had, will very soon be doubling in size. I'm sending you a copy firstly so that you can put it in your listing of groups, etc., if you're still producing it, and secondly because we would like to trade copies of it for BiWomen.

As you may know, some people in this country have had difficulties subscribing to BiWomen as it is very expensive to get international money orders for small amounts and I'm told your bank won't accept them for \$10 anyway. So if we send you regular copies of Bifrost could you send us BiWomen at the address below? I hope this will be ok.

If anyone wants to write anything for us we would be very interested, particularly in personal experiences or theory. Not much over 1,000 words is good, though we'll soon be in a position to print longer things. We also want to have a letters page.

If you want to list Bifrost can you say that the subscription is £5 within the U.K. We aren't sure

of how to accept overseas orders yet, but will try to send free copies if we can afford to. We will also be running a workshop at the British Conference and, of course, taking subscriptions.

Love, light, and peace

Alison
P.O. Box 117
Norwich
NR1 2SU
U.K.

9th August 1991

Dear BBWN,

Well, I was very shocked to see the letter from Sarah Dreher and the text of her speech reprinted in BiWomen. The photographs were also shocking and very moving, particularly the photo of Laura Silver and her lover. I was amazed to see that one anti-bisexual lesbian actually tried to block the path of Queer Nation. Whilst it is very instructive to realise that the Bi Movement, and most of the Gay Movement, are at 5 minutes to midnight with the HIV/AIDS epidemic — whereas this colony of lesbians still thinks it is 3:30 in the afternoon, — I do question the wisdom of extending "free speech" to actually giving a platform to bigotry in your newsletter? I found the letters and speech offensive and unacceptable. These women also are actually encouraging violence against themselves, it occurs to me, by their hostile, provocative, selfish and spiteful speech and behaviour. It is just this sort of vicious infighting from the "holier than thou" lesbian which has more or less destroyed the Women's Liberation Movement in the U.K.; although I will say that I think the real problem is that lesbians from all political spectrums have failed to identify with the Gay Community at large, — because they have been so busy trying to get the straight world [to] accept them as "normal," — and that this has been happening for the last 20 years, due to the lack of a progressive ideology. (This may sound harsh but that doesn't mean it ain't true!) I also object to Sara Dreher's homophobia against the lesbian-in-me: perhaps she is just directing her "self-hatred" outward now?

Sincerely,
Zaidie Parr

The letter from Sarah Dreher was, in fact, printed in the interest of "free speech." She wrote to BiWomen, and we simply printed her letter. However, the decision to reprint her speech (as it had appeared in a Northampton paper) was a difficult one. Our reasoning was this: Many of us in Boston have had to rely on

Letters continues on next page

Send letters to:

BiWomen

BBWN

338 Newbury
Street, 202C

Boston, MA
02115



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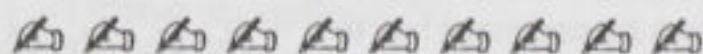


Dare

I would never dare to
kiss you
But I might
think it and wonder
From across the room
I might say
Why not in
earnest musings
And you will go away
to where
I might
never know
Though we built this
fragile friendship
Stretched to
Limits I could
feel
But did not want
And could not
break through like a
runner who had
Won

by [REDACTED]
© 1990

Letters, from previous page
second-hand accounts of what actually happened in Northampton regarding their Pride March — and some of those accounts were, at times, conflicting. We felt it would be of service to our audience to have something in black and white. Reading her speech has helped make the views of at least one of the march organizers very clear to us — and, apparently, to you, too. Thanks for your letter. — Eds.



Dear BBWN,

It is great to be back in Boston — unfortunately, I haven't made it to many events as of yet. Hopefully, things will calm down a bit in the next few months and I will see you all at a few of the wonderful monthly brunches and other events.

Note:

1992 National Conference — Dallas — Still On!

I have been speaking with Judy A. in Dallas and it sounds like things are well underway for the planning of the 1992 National Conference.

She has been speaking with Naomi in S.F. for some information regarding the last National Conference and they have [begun] researching various locations and fund raising ideas. If you have any fun fund raising ideas, please let them know at:

P.O. Box 117574
Carrollton, TX 75007

or:

Bi-Net
Attn. Conference Planning Committee
P.O. box 190712
Dallas, TX 75219

Other than that, as I'm sure you've all heard, I have obtained a job, an apartment, several great new friendships and strengthened some old relationships as well.

My job is quite well, I really like my Boss, the work and the environment for the most part. More later.

Right now, I am evaluating a new word processing system and figured what better way to fit in a letter to you all — so I'm a[t] work — now you understand my writing style better, don't you? I am working as a Word Processing Supervisor/Proposal Secretary — it has been a little slow since I started but appears that it can get rather challenging at times. Especially on Friday afternoons I understand.

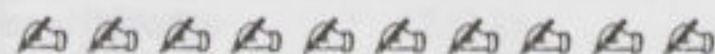
Unfortunately, one of my best "new" friendships/romances has returned to school to Pennsylvania and I will no longer be able to spend time with him on a regular basis — but hey, it was a great summer and now maybe —

you all will get to put up with me!!

So long for now — if you would like to get a hold of me — please send mail through the delivery box at the Center and I'll return your interest — as long as I know who you are and that you are for real — I'm a little hesitant to publish it since the newsletters are now available on a shelf.

Lots of love and laughter, peace and hugs,

Sharla



Dear BBWN,

On June 8th, I marched in my first Boston Pride parade. I had opened myself up to the experience and made myself vulnerable to negative and positive reactions. As I marched, I was filled with an array of emotions. When I heard some woman yell the first "Fencesitter," I realized that it wasn't going to be the type of march I imagined. I guess I wasn't prepared for people to stop clapping as soon as they saw my sign or that ECBN wouldn't receive the greatest of welcomes from some of the spectators. I had read about Bisexuals being shunned in other parades (such as Northampton) but, I guess I wasn't ready to receive that negative energy on this particular day. (Just a little wet behind the ears?!) To continue, I was extremely thankful to a woman named Jean for all her support. (Thanks, Jean, if you see this!) I also was thankful and surprised at the number of men and women who approached me and told me they were "married (hetero) Bisexuals" also. But, I was concerned about the lack of visibility of the other fellow married Bisexuals. I'm sure this is their personal choice. I had discussed this issue in the Bi support group and with others and feel this is an issue that the Bi community should discuss. "Do we support it or not?" or more like it, "Are we supported or not?" What is the consensus of opinion in the Bi Community? Being Bisexual for me means acknowledging my hetero and lesbian sides. At this point in my life, I choose to be with a man, but that doesn't mean I'm no longer Bisexual. I really need support in this area and would like to know if there [are] other married Bisexuals and longterm/committed Bisexuals (to opposite sex) who feel the need for support in this area too. I would consider running a support group in Hartford, CT (if anyone is interested). Please get my address and phone number from the BBWN. To close, thanks again for all the support I received during the march and I hope to continue to get support in this area and others.


With love and respect,

Holly L. Danyliw
Hartford, CT



No Experience Necessary...

Volunteers are needed to staff the BBWN office at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, Monday evenings. Can you spare one Monday a month? To volunteer, call (617) BIS-MOVE and leave a message for Stephanie. Training will be provided.

Thanks. 



CALENDAR, continued from back page

November 18 ♦ Monday
BBWN Special Meeting. Please see page 12 for details!

November 20 ♦ Wednesday
Biversity Boston General Meeting, 6-8pm. Open to all genders. \$2 requested from those who can afford it. At **THE CENTER**, room 204. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

November 23 ♦ Saturday
WOW: Way Out in Waltham, Watch City's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Group Potluck Dinner and Video Night. 5:30pm, dinner 6:30pm. Location & info: (617) 893-0742 or 893-0361.

November 25 ♦ Monday
BBWN Volunteer Night. Help stuff the Dec./Jan. newsletter! See old friends, make new ones! 6-10pm at **THE CENTER**. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

December 6 ♦ Friday
Swingtime, Boston's monthly Lesbian/Gay/Bi Swing Dance, 8:15pm-midnight. Free dance lesson 8:15-9pm. Dance the night away to the fabulous sounds of Cheek to Cheek, Boston's Lesbian and Gay Swing Orchestra. Casual dress. Smoke/alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. \$5 admission, includes refreshments. Set-up, clean-up volunteers get in free. At the Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Harvard Square. Info: (617) 629-2219.

December 9 ♦ Monday

BBWN Intro Meeting, 7:30pm. A safe place for women who want to learn more about bisexuality – myths, theories, experiences – and to connect with the bi community. All women welcome! At the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Ongoing:

Sundays:

Alateen Group open to bisexual, lesbian and gay youth 22 and under who are affected by alcoholism in a family member or a close friend. 6pm. At **THE CENTER**.

Mondays:

Bisexual Alcoholics Anonymous. 7:30-8:30pm, Mass. General Hospital, under Amphitheater (go past the Lower Amphitheater, take stairs up 3 flights). Closed speaker-discussion. Info: leave message for Ingrid at (617) 641-3281.

Tuesdays:

Bisexual Women's Rap Group. 7:30pm-10pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Central Square, Cambridge. All women welcome. Info: (617) 354-6658.

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Freedom Trail Band Rehearsals. Concert and marching band, no auditions. 7:30-9:30pm. Location and info: Kathy (617) 236-5978.



Wednesdays:

Bisexual Children of Alcoholics. 7:30pm. An Al-Anon meeting for bisexual children of alcoholics. Mass. General Hospital, lower amphitheater (next to the emergency room entrance), Boston. Info: Marge at (617) 259-1559.

Fridays:

The Friday Night Video Series at THE CENTER, 7pm. Suggested donation \$1. Info: (617) 247-2927.

Steppin' Out on Broadway, Country/Western dances for Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Friends. 8pm dance lessons. 9pm-midnight: Texas two-step, Swing, and Line dancing. Smoke/alcohol-free, juice bar, DJ. No partner necessary. Admission \$5. At "On Broadway," 880 Broadway, Somerville. Info: Dee at (617) 562-0294.

Fourth Saturday of the month:

Slow Dancing at the Center, 9pm-1am. "Featuring smooth, romantic, and sexy music from artists like Anita Baker, Frank Sinatra, Bette Midler, Jeffrey Osborne, Chaka Khan, Robert Palmer, Regina Bell and Sade." Suggested donation \$5. Info: (617) 247-2927.




Calendar sources:

RADIA, New Haven's Feminist Calendar and Newsletter, 614 Orange Street, New Haven, CT 06511 (203) 776-2658. \$20/year (12 issues).

Boston's Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street, 2nd floor, Boston, MA 02115. (617) 247-2927.

Biversity Boston, (617) BIS-MOVE.





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RESOURCES

BAGLY

The Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth, Inc. is a youth-run social support organization devoted to providing a safe place for people age 22 and under to meet, find friends, discuss experiences and get useful information without fear of being exposed, judged or labeled. They offer discussion meetings, social time and other activities — including seasonal dances, a prom in June, trips, movies, and cultural events — for individuals who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or undecided.

All BAGLY meetings are located in a downtown Boston church, close to public transportation, and are wheelchair accessible. Call them at 1-800-42-BAGLY, or, in the 617 area code, 523-7363. They also have a TTY/TDD number, 983-9845.

Biversity Boston

Boston recently acquired its first "mixed" group for bisexuals of



(to next page)

Women's Bisexuality Support Group . . .

. . . is forming to discuss issues and affirm experiences on a personal level related to our lives as bisexuals.

Possible areas of discussion: bisexuality in a heterosexual world, bisexual pride and self esteem, societal rules and expectations about relationships, being in love and feeling loved, birth control and sexually transmitted diseases, splits between gays and straights, coming out and acceptance, belonging to many communities, stereotypes and lifestyles, sexual abuse and healing sexually, memories of childhood and youth, the spectrum of sexual orientation, feminism, and spirituality.

The group would allow members to know and support one another on a regular basis, as well as to express personal experiences in a safe environment. If you are interested in helping create this group please call [redacted] at (617) BIS - MOVE and leave your name, phone number, and what time to call you back. I am a woman of color and women of color are highly welcome.



Community, from page 1

are we going to get it!? As Loraine Hutchins and Lani Kaahumanu discuss in the Community issue of *Anything That Moves* (ATM), "Building bisexual community is crucial. Community gives a shared sense of pride and acceptance of the whole. It breaks down the isolation and fear, giving strength to those who come out. As people identify with each other a sense of caring and sharing emerges."¹

I hope to shed some light on this somewhat "controversial" meeting, but more importantly attempt to open up a dialogue about our identity as a bisexual community in Boston. Food for thought to take back to our own circles. I strongly believe that before we can emerge as a visible, vibrant movement standing on our own, or within other liberation move-

ments, we have to have a better sense of ourselves. What are our goals, our visions; what is our sense of ourselves as bisexuals? And how has our bisexuality informed/affected how we are in the world? We don't just wear our sexuality when we're out in the world. We may come together around our sexuality initially, but it shouldn't *solely* inform the scope of our activism.

All over the world we have witnessed a growing cohesion of a bisexual movement; new regional and national networks here and abroad; more folks marching in gay pride parades; a bisexual visibility in AIDS activism; countless anthologies and periodicals; lesbian and gay organizations becoming more inclusive; and so on. Boston has experienced waves of action and growth but, as an area bi activist, my hope has been to move us closer; to create an active, growing, empowering, inclusive Boston Bisexual Community. Beth Reba Weise asks in her article, also in ATM, "How can we build a community that supports individual choice and freedom while at the same time honors the differences, dissent and non-conformity inherent in that agenda? The issue may not be whether or not there is a bisexual community, but rather, can the bisexual community adequately fill the needs of all bisexuals?"²

We started the June community meeting with a brainstorming session around the question, "What do we want from a network/community?" The answers included: diversity, support, communication, social time, political activism, assumed bisexuality/having someone to talk to, unity between women and men, nurturing friendships, sharing of resources/information dispersal, respect, multi-focus, pushing boundaries/definitions of ourselves, women's space, challenging men's internalized homophobia, men's space, multiculturalism, a place to deal with internalized/externalized biphobia, coalition building, sex, explore issues of pornography and erotica, self-awareness, confrontation, bi-parenting and child rearing, role models, alternative living, awareness of oppression (racism, ageism, sexism), and inclusion within the gay community. It is clear from this discussion we all have our own needs and agendas, some of which have already been met, while others still lack the structures to happen.

We then attempted to discuss how these needs could be met by a network/community. What structures needed to be in place. We were able to break down our want list to about five major categories: 1) health issues/rights, care, parenting/children; 2) sexuality/sex, theory; 3) social/support, friendships; 4) Political-activism, theory; and 5) self awareness/how others view us. This type of discussion is often

Community continues on next page

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RESOURCES

▼
(from preceding page)

all genders — Biversity Boston. This group hopes to "fill the gap" in Boston for those people who prefer to participate in groups not limited to a single gender. Biversity Boston is open to all bisexuals and bi-positive people of any sexual orientation. For more information call the Bisexual Resource Office at (617) BIS-MOVE.

Pink Flamingoes

The Pink Flamingoes is a new group in the Gender Community. The group is a place where crossdressers, transgenderists, and transsexuals can find mutual support, referral, advocacy, and social contact.

If you are a transsexual, transgenderist, crossdresser, or someone who's just curious, the Pink Flamingoes would like you to come to one of their meetings. They meet every Saturday at 4pm in The Center, 338 Newbury Street, Boston. For information, call (617) 247-2927.

New Yorkers:

Bisexual Women meet every 2nd and 4th Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. — 8:00 p.m. at the Community Center, 208 W. 13th Street. \$3 donation.

Bi Information: (212) 459-4784.



Community, from preceding page

difficult. For many of the folks at the Community meeting this was one of their first entrances to the larger Boston Bisexual community. Yet these issues do effect all of us. I felt we were able to look at ourselves to get some sense of what has been effective and what hasn't.

In any growing movement we need to acknowledge our strengths and our weaknesses. By the sheer act of bi-folks getting together we learn from each other; how we live our lives, who are our role models. Folks felt that, overall the networks, mainly functioning as peer groups have been able to create a support system that empowers individuals to be visible; to be OUT as bisexuals. From there we moved to what needs to be further developed. Like any organization, unfortunately, that list tends to be longer. How do we create a space in our networks for people just coming out and those of us who have been out for awhile? How do we remove the impediments for more heterosexual oriented bisexuals to become a part of the networks? How do we bring folks in who are already out there doing bi-stuff?

Specifically talking about the women's network, there was the sense that the network is set up to better address the needs of women coming out without creating the resources / space for women who've been out and / or active prior or within BBWN. How can we as a women's network continue to grow? It was suggested that one way to move away from the burn-out syndrome so many organizations experience is to somehow create a vehicle in which to train the next generation of activists. As involvement and energy waxes and wanes there will always be those to carry on.

We briefly touched on the relationship between the women's and men's networks. The consensus seemed to indicate that there needs to be more communication, generally, between women and men. Instead of working from assumptions, we actively need to create a safe / trusting environment in which to work, while also respecting women's space.

I've brought up more questions in this article than we at the meeting, or myself, individually can answer. It is my wish that as bisexual women we can come together to form our own agenda, as and with BBWN, and further contribute to the larger bisexual community. Perhaps in the coming months we can strategize amongst ourselves and then meet for a BBWN community meeting. And maybe together we can start answering these seemingly unanswerable questions. ▼

1. "Who Are We? Establishing & Reclaiming the Bisexual Community," *Anything That Moves*, Spring 1991, published by the Bay Area Bisexual Network.
2. "The Bisexual Community: Viable Reality or Revolutionary Pipe Dream?", *Ibid*.

From Slur to Slogan

The Boston Globe [July 28, 1991, p. 67] recently published a great article by Lillian Faderman on the use and origin of the word "queer." She draws analogies between the recent use of the word "queer" by lesbians, bisexuals, and gays, and the adoption of the label "black" by African-Americans, as well as the use of the term "dyke" by lesbians in the 1970s. She says that to coin phrases like "Black is Beautiful" or "We're here, we're queer, we're fabulous!" defuses the power of the words "black" and "queer", formerly used hatefully against African-Americans and homosexuals, respectively.

The article is a must-read, and a refreshing, progressive step forward for an established mainstream newspaper like The Boston Globe.

— Sue S.

Hot off the press! Now 28 pages long!

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To Whom it May Concern:

Ms.

The letters in the Sept./Oct. 1991 issue of Ms. in response to Lindsey Van Gelder's "The 'Born That Way' Trap" * were a mixed bag. Here's a couple of excerpts:

From Gainesville, Fla.:

I can only begin to tell you how much I appreciated [her article].

Many of my friends are gay and most accept the "born that way" theory. I do not accept it. I don't believe I was born heterosexual or bisexual. I was simply born a small human being.

I've chosen not to remain a mainstream heterosexual. But I have also chosen not to become a mainstream homosexual. I don't know if this means I'm "experimenting" or if I'll have a foot in both communities forever. However, I do know that my sexual orientation will be a conscious choice.

Thank you for a good read and a little controversy.

From Akron, Ohio:

I disagree with Lindsey Ven Gelder and believe her views do not reflect the reality of the lesbian and gay communities. . . .

Van Gelder defines herself as a lesbian, though she says she has fallen in love with men and "took pleasure in sleeping with them." Please! I define myself as a lesbian because even though there are men in my life who are very dear to me, my intimate and sexual relationships are with women exclusively. To me, if someone can have the same intimate and sexual relationships with

members of either gender, they are bisexual. The fact that the individual feels a choice exists indicates bisexuality. . . .

From Louisville, Ky.:

When the Louisville and Jefferson County Human Relations Commission heard testimony on whether to endorse a gay rights amendment to local civil rights ordinances in 1986, Lyman Johnson, this city's premier civil rights activist and a member of the commission, said: "We protect people from discrimination on account of race, and that is not a choice. We also protect people from discrimination based on religion which is a choice. So whether men and women choose to be gay and lesbian, or were born that way, they need to be accorded the same rights as everyone else." Johnson's remarks helped turn the final vote toward recommendation of the amendments.

I'm certain I wasn't "born that way." I'm equally certain that some lesbians and gay men probably were. But we are human beings first, and deserve the best treatment our society gives us. That is the fundamental issue, one that Van Gelder was brilliant enough to face squarely.

* The "Born That Way" Trap appeared in the August/September issue of BiWomen.

[Ms. subscriptions: P.O. Box 57131, Boulder, CO 80322-7131. \$45/yr. (6 issues). Editorial offices: 230 Park Ave., New York, NY 10169.]

Update: Creating Change Conference

This is to update you on the response from the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce (NGLTF) to our April 25th letter to them regarding active bi participation in their annual leadership training conference, to be held November 8-11 in a hotel outside of Washington D.C. [See BiWomen June/July 1991, p.9.] Last year in the midwest, there was some good bi inclusion and some problems with biphobia too. After that Lani Kaahumanu wrote a great letter to NGLTF director Urvashi Vaid, which was followed up by the joint letter we all signed and sent to them April 25th urging that they include bi leaders in all their workshop presentations, as well as scheduling an official bi caucus and workshop on biphobia. This included suggestions about specific bi leaders for the people of color track and the campus track. Lani later followed up with conference programmer Ivy Young to give her more specific information on the

Creating Change continues on next page



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Call for essays...

...on the politics of bisexuality. Bisexual activists Naomi Tucker and Brad Robinson are seeking essays for an anthology to examine how our sexuality and our politics have converged to form who we are and how we look at the world. This book is the next logical step in a progression of recently published bisexual anthologies. They want to collect the voices of women and men who are creating and defining bisexual politics. They especially encourage those whose voices have been traditionally silenced or censored to submit writing that speaks to your personal experience.

Submissions can be sent on disk (Macintosh or IBM compatible), or as double-spaced, typewritten manuscripts, by **November 1, 1991**, to:

Bisexual Politics
584 Castro St. #136
San Francisco, CA
94114

For more information, contact Brad at (415) 826-5788 or Naomi at (415) 553-7725.

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Creating Change, from preceding page

qualifications of the bi leaders we had suggested.

Yesterday NGLTF went to print on their tentative program line-up. They asked us for a title/description of the biphobia workshop, and we submitted: *Self-Identity, Behavior, Orientation: Unlearning Biphobia — an experimental workshop for activists in the lesbian/gay community who would like to understand how the myth of monosexuality marginalizes lesbians and gay men and perpetuates the oppression of all sexual minorities*. It will probably be held Monday 9-10:30am at the Old Colony Inn in Alexandria, Va., near National Airport. There are hotel shuttles from the airport metro stop. The taskforce conference coordinator Brian Albert is very bi-positive. There will be time for a bi caucus (networking session) before the workshop, probably on Saturday.

Considering travel time and expense, you west-coasters may want to wait for Creating Change West (which is being planned for later this year and which they say will include more than the LA white gay men it did last year), but if you're planning to come, please let us know.

Anyone interested in coming should contact me, ASAP, either in writing at 6104 Third Street, NW, DC 20011, or by phone at work, (202) 822-9193 or at home, (202) 882-4384. Thanks!

— Loraine Hutchins

Women's Health Issues

The Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus has begun sponsoring a letter-writing campaign to the Massachusetts Congressional delegation on behalf of HR.1161, the Women's Health Equity Act. The act is sponsored by Congresswoman Pat Schroeder (D-Colorado). Massachusetts co-sponsors are Ed Markey (D-7th CD) and Richard Neal (D-2nd CD).

The Women's Health Equity Act would promote greater equity in the delivery of health care services to women in the U.S. through expanded research on women's health issues, improved access to health care services, and the development of disease prevention activities responsive to the needs of women.

Among its provisions, the bill would require that women and minorities be included in clinical trials, except where such inclusion would be inappropriate. Currently, according to the American Medical Association (AMA), women are likely to receive inadequate treatment for such conditions as cardiovascular disease, because diagnostic and treatment protocols are based on studies done on men alone. For example, although heart disease is the number one killer of women in the U.S., the two most recent clinical trials in the area of heart disease included 15,000 and 22,000 men, and no women.

The bill would also increase funding by \$25 million for basic cancer research. Recent studies have shown that the incidence of breast cancer is increasing at an alarming rate — a fourfold increase for older women. Another provision of the bill sets national quality standards for mammography. Currently, 75% of the facilities performing mammographies in the U.S. do not adhere to the quality standards established voluntarily by the American College of Radiology. Other parts of the bill pertain to women and AIDS, ovarian cancer research, Medicaid coverage for mammographies and PAP smears, and alcohol and drug abuse.

Massachusetts residents: You can write your Congressperson at the following address, Washington, D.C. 20515:

District	Congressperson	Address
First	Pending 6/4 election	Pending
Second	Richard E. Neal	437 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Third	Joseph D. Early	2349 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Fourth	Barney Frank	1030 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Fifth	Chester G. Atkins	123 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Sixth	Nicholas Mavroules	2334 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Seventh	Edward J. Markey	2133 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Eighth	Joseph P. Kennedy	1208 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Ninth	John Joseph Moakley	221 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Tenth	Gerry E. Studds	237 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Eleventh	Brian J. Donnelly	2229 Rayburn House Office Bldg.

Donahue

As you may have read in the last issue of BiWomen, the Phil Donahue Show on May 14, 1991, had as its topic, "The Difference Between Men and Women from People Who Have Slept with Both." A copy of the following letter was sent to BiWomen.

Adrienne Lopez
Donahue Show
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Room 827
New York, NY 10112



Dear Adrienne,

We heard, from our publisher, that the show you discussed with us aired this week. We hope it went well. However, we did want to register a serious concern and ask you to keep it in mind when scheduling future shows:

None of the bi-behaving people you interviewed really identifies as bi. However, in preliminary research and preparation for the show you did speak with people who:

(1) are bisexual activists locally and nationally

(2) identify, openly, as bi, within both the lesbian / gay and straight communities.

We are not questioning the producers' judgement or vision about this particular show. We are urging that you evaluate the decision to exclude this point of view.



Greetings Bi Womyn:

I am organizing a small group of womyn interested in eating, writing, reading and talking about *EROTICA*. We will keep journals of our writings, meet once a month, share a sumptuous potluck feast, and indulge each other with our tales/fantasies/dreams of the power of the erotic. 'Uncensored, womyn-centered, finger-lickin', mouth-waterin' delights. Commitment to six meetings preferred. Call Ginny at 864-3404.

SHERRY M. COHEN PSYCHOTHERAPY

P.O. Box 186 (617) 322-3054
West Newton, MA 02165 Insurance/fees negotiable

There are often misconceptions among the general public as well as talk show programmers (as we discussed with you during our phone conversations), that bisexuals are confused about their identity. The wide variety of bisexual people, as you yourself recognized and acknowledged from reading BI ANY OTHER NAME: Bisexual People Speak Out, is certainly a subject of major interest and curiosity. Because of the general lack of information it is an educational and entertaining subject.

We hope you'll consider these questions in your programming for the future. In the meantime, we both enjoyed talking with you. We just want to add these concerns to your awareness, and would appreciate hearing from you. Thanks.

Bisexually Yours,

Loraine Hutchins and
Lani Kaahumanu
Co-Editors
BI ANY OTHER NAME

Keep up the great work, Loraine and Lani!

Queer Planet Review Spins into Orbit!



Queer Planet Review ("One Planet, Many Homosexuals") is a brand-new — never been published! — monthly journal of LesBiGay expression. They claim, "We are everything to everyone." Well, given that I'm sure you'll want more information! The deadline for submissions (politically correct or otherwise) is the 15th of the month preceding the month of publication. Work may be sent to Thome Street Publications, Ltd., 3023 N. Clark, suite 302, Chicago, IL 60657. A subscription (12 monthly issues) costs \$26; just send a check or money order to the above address.

— Sue S.

Women Going Places...

... is a new worldwide guide for women, providing travel information and also "an opportunity for women to share information and resources important to our lives. The accuracy of the entries in it will be monitored and updated by women involved with women in every part of the world, and will bear witness to the enormous changes we are living through at this time, particularly here in Europe." The book will be available at women's stores across the country. For more information, or to get involved, contact Women Going Places, The Business Factory, 15 Norwalk Place, London W2 1QJ, UK, phone 071-706-2434, fax 071-706-1942.

— Reported in RADIA, New Haven's Feminist Calendar and Newsletter

Coming Full Circle

A one-day playshop for women

Coming Full Circle is designed to help participants release their free spirit in a supportive, non-threatening environment. Through various forms of play we will explore how we can incorporate fun into our daily lives.

**Saturday, November 9, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
at the YMCA in Framingham, Mass.**

Facilitators:

Shelly Cullen, LCSW

Lorette Dussault, MSW, CSW

Enrollment is limited. For more information, or to pre-register, call (508) 429-8040.

BiNet, from page 1

Techniques and Tips will be available by late September.

BiNet is compiling a list of **media contacts** in an effort to expand bi visibility. Please send information on:

- local lesbian/gay/bisexual/TV/TS/queer media
- progressive/alternative media
- mainstream media
- potential promo locations (bookstores, universities, women's centers, etc.)
- AIDS/HIV publications
- other media that should get information on BiNet



Of course, it would be best for us to receive only the names of media contacts that you think would respond to a BiNet mailing. . .

Lists of **bi paraphernalia** (buttons, t-shirts) will be available through BiNet. Tell us what is available, with info on how to get it.

BiNet

584 Castro Street #441

San Francisco, CA 94114-2588

Please indicate if we need to use discretion when responding.



To get your very own subscription to **BiNet: The Newsletter of the Bisexual Network of the USA**, use the form below. Become a part of the fast-growing **BiNet**!

CLIP OUT AND SEND IN FOR YOUR PRIZE... - - - - -

- ☐ I want to be a card-carrying bisexual!

Please send me a laminated BiNet "I am a card-carrying bisexual" card.

Name on card (please print or type):

Enclosed: \$ _____ (Cost to BiNet is \$5 for production and mailing)

☐ Please be discrete when y'all write or phone me.

- ☐ I want to support BiNet's work, be a member, and receive the quarterly newsletter.

Enclosed: \$ _____ (Cost to BiNet is \$8-10/year for production and mailing)

- ☐ I would like to receive the *International Directory of Bisexual Groups*.

Enclosed: \$ _____ (Cost to BiNet and ECBN is \$5 for production and mailing)

- ☐ Enclosed is a donation of: ☐ \$50 ☐ \$35 ☐ \$20, ☐ Other: \$ _____

to help with general BiNet costs, and to assist those who cannot afford to pay.

All interested individuals and groups can receive the newsletter, directory, and be BiNet members, regardless of ability to pay. Please donate what you can. Be generous—it costs money for postage, printing, and network startup costs.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____ (Please make all checks payable to "BiNet")

- ☐ Please send information on how to get more involved with the network.

Name: _____

Address: _____

I'm a contact for (an existing bi group, if applicable): _____

CALENDAR

THE CENTER

is the Lesbian and Gay
Community Center, 338
Newbury Street, Suite 202C,
Boston, MA 02115.

For Ongoing
Events,
see page 5

November 18
Monday:

BBWN Special Meeting

It's time to look at our-
selves and where we're
going. If you are
coordinating any
BBWN activity, or
would like to (or even
have strong opinions),
then come to this
important meeting.

Potluck dinner at 6:30
p.m., official business at
7:30 p.m. at Robyn's in
Cambridge.

Call (617) 495-8476 for
directions.

November 25
Monday:

BBWN Volunteer Night

Help stuff the Dec./Jan.
issue of BiWomen! See
old friends, make new
friends. It's a lot of fun,
especially when a lot of
women show up! You
can read BiWomen hot
off the presses! Bonus:
You get to share Laura
S.'s birthday cake!

6-10 p.m. at
THE CENTER

Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Oct. 5 ♦ Saturday

Adrienne Rich reading from her new book, *An Atlas of the Difficult World*. To benefit *Bridges - A Journal for Jewish Feminists and our Friends*. With music by Rita Fabel. \$10 (sliding scale). Wheelchair accessible, ASL interpreted. Info: (617) 983-5251.

WOW: Way Out in Waltham, Watch City's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Group goes whale-watching in Gloucester. Location & info: (617) 893-0742 or 893-0361.

October 6 ♦ Sunday

Dykes Dialogue, an informal discussion group for women. Topic: Lesbian Marriage Contracts (Kathy Triantafillou). 4pm at **THE CENTER**. Info: (617) 247-2927.

Bi Space. A place for all bi people to come and meet other bisexuals and talk about bisexual issues. There is no agenda and no set topic. Just a friendly space for whatever develops. A \$2 donation is requested to help cover costs. At **THE CENTER**, room 204. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

October 7 ♦ Monday

BBWN Intro Meeting, 7:30pm. A safe place for women who want to learn more about bisexuality - myths, theories, experiences - and to connect with the bi community. All women welcome! At the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, Mass.

No Dykes Dialogue meeting October 13.

October 16 ♦ Wednesday

Biversity Boston General Meeting, 6-8pm. Open to all genders. \$2 requested from those who can afford it. At **THE CENTER**, room 204. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE

October 18 ♦ Friday

Ballroom Dance for Lesbians, Gay Men and their Friends, 8:30-11pm. Rumba dance lesson for beginners at 8pm. Smoke-free. \$5. At the First Church in Jamaica Plain, corner of Centre and Eliot Streets. Info: (617) 859-9455.

October 19 ♦ Saturday

Monthly Bi Brunch. Meet at 10:45am at Au Bon Pain in Harvard Square, Cambridge. Nearest T stop is Harvard on the Red Line. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

October 20 ♦ Sunday

WOW: Way Out in Waltham, Watch City's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Group goes canoeing. Location & info: (617) 893-0742 or 893-0361.

Dykes Dialogue, an informal discussion group for women. Topic: The Artist Within You (Ginny Remedi). 4pm at **THE CENTER**. Info: (617) 247-2927.



October 26 ♦ Saturday

WOW: Way Out in Waltham, Watch City's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Group Pumpkin Party, 8pm. Location & info: (617) 893-0742 or 893-0361.

First Annual Connecticut State University Conference on Women's Studies. Panels will include topics related to women's studies, equity, gender, etc., and will include performance/display of creative works. Info: (203) 397-4204 or (203) 397-4202.

October 27 ♦ Sunday

Dykes Dialogue, an informal discussion group for women. Topic: Erotic Sexual Fantasies (Jasmine Sterling). Bring writings of your sexual fantasies. 4pm at **THE CENTER**. Info: (617) 247-2927.

October 31 ♦ Thursday

Halloween Party at THE CENTER, room 204, 6-10pm. Info: (617) 247-2927

November 1 ♦ Friday

Swingtime, Boston's monthly Lesbian/Gay/Bi Swing Dance, 8:15pm-midnight. Halloween/50's Dance. Free Jitterbug lesson 8:15-9pm. Costumes encouraged. Smoke/alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. \$5 admission, includes refreshments. Set-up, clean-up volunteers get in free. At the Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Harvard Square. Info: (617) 629-2219.

November 3 ♦ Sunday

Bi Space. See October 6.

November 9 ♦ Saturday

Dancing in Time, a Five-Hour Dance-a-thon to Benefit the AIDS Action Committee. 6-11pm at the Hynes Convention Center. *Join Kiss-108FM as their top DJs spin the greatest hits while thousands of caring people dance the night away! Info: (617) 266-6906.

November 9-11 ♦ Saturday-Monday

Creating Change, the Fourth Annual Conference for Gay and Lesbian Organizing Skills Building. At the Old Colony Inn, Alexandria, VA. Info: (202) 332-6483. [See related article, page 8]

November 10 ♦ Sunday

WOW: Way Out in Waltham, Watch City's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Group Brunch. Location & info: (617) 893-0742 or 893-0361.

November 16 ♦ Saturday

Monthly Bi Brunch. Meet at 10:45am at the S & S, 1334 Cambridge Street (Inman Square) in Cambridge. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

CALENDAR continues on page 5

Bi Women

The Newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network

...And Bisexual Studies Conference



A report on the *Fifth Annual Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference*, hosted by Rutgers and Princeton Universities, November 1-3, 1991

By Rebecca Kaplan and Annie Senghas

Last weekend we attended the *Fifth Annual Lesbian and Gay (and Bisexual?) Studies Conference* at Rutgers University. The conference was an exciting event, featuring over 250 papers and 2,000 participants, several films, a book display, and a dance. Progress in the role of bisexuals at this conference moved several steps forward, and took a couple steps back.

It was hard to choose among the many panels. Often five panels were being given at one time, each with four papers. Many topics were covered, with titles ranging from *Prosecution as*

a Discourse on Sodomy in 18th Century Holland to *Madonna and the Glamour Dykes: The Politics of Lesbian Camp*. The distribution of panels leaned heavily towards literary criticism (with a whole panel devoted to *Shakespeare, the Hard Bard*).

Many of us wondered how much of this year's conference would address bisexuality. Last year, at the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Studies Conference at Harvard, a flyer was handed out advertising this year's conference. That flyer announced the coming 1991 Lesbian and Gay Studies conference, with the word *bisexual* intentionally removed. As the

date of the conference approached, we learned that papers dealing with bisexuality had been accepted for the conference, and a bi caucus and symposium had also been planned. So we headed to Rutgers, excited about the prospects for high bi participation, yet a little anxious about whether the elimination of the word *bisexual* might mean we weren't really welcome.

Saturday morning, the bleary-eyed bis had to get out of bed early in order to attend the 9 a.m. symposium titled: *Lesbian, Gay ... and Bisexual?* It was an inspiring symposium, well worth the loss of sleep. The panelists were Elias Farajate-Jones, Cora Kaplan, and Boston's own Robyn Ochs, Pam Ellis and Warren Blumenfeld. They discussed a range of issues including:

... and Bisexual continues on page 6

BiCEP – The Political Arm of the Networks

Bisexual Committee Engaging in Politics (BiCEP) General Meeting
7:00pm, Monday Dec. 16th at the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Community Center,
338 Newbury Street, 2nd Floor, Boston.
Info: Call (617) BIS-MOVE; leave a message and we'll get back to you.

BiCEP is a group a women and men whose aims include increasing awareness, visibility, and understanding of bisexual people; dispelling myths; and countering biased portrayals of bisexuals.

BiCEP continues on page 14

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BBWN News

Honor Roll

◆
Ginny S.
Lucy F.
Liz H.
Romani R.
Kathleen F.
Rebecca K.
Robyn O.
Stephanie B.
Gail Z.
Sharon G.
Ann
Michelle H.
Laura P.
Sue S.
Kathleen H.
Sue K.
Joyce
Ginny L.
Ananda L.
Claire M.
Marcia D.
Sue R.
Laura S.
Ann G.



BiWomen is published
bi-monthly, of course.

Editor:
Kathleen Hepburn

Assistant Editor:
Sue Schiefelbein

And now, a message from our much-appreciated Volunteer Coordinator, Stephanie . . .

Volunteers Needed!

Here's a breakdown of the jobs BBWN needs help with. Although most of these jobs aren't glamorous, it's what keeps the network afloat (and the volunteer coordinator sane!). Every little bit helps, whether it's one hour or 10 hours a month.

Leave a message for Stephanie at (617) BIS-MOVE, and please specify which job you're interested in.

Staffing: We need women to staff the office 3-4 hours one Monday a month. Responsibilities include sorting through mail, updating mailing list, answering inquiries via mail and phone, and calling folks about upcoming events such as volunteer nights.

I encourage volunteers to take on their own projects. This is also a great opportunity to read about Bisexual activities all over the world.

Phone Calling: You can do this job from your home. Call back folks who have called the BBWN office requesting info about the network and/or bisexuality. You don't have to be an "expert," you only have to like talking on the phone. We have the info you'll need already

written up. This job could also mean calling folks about upcoming events.

Publicist: Sending out calendar listing to local gay, women's and community papers about BBWN events. This can also be done from your home, probably once every month. This person should also update the list of sources we do send info to. This only has to be done once.

Merchandise Maven: We get a lot of request for buttons and T-shirts. You would come to our lovely downtown, centrally located office and fill those requests. And also make sure our supplies stay stocked. This is a minimal time commitment.

Pagemaker Experts and other Graphic Design types: This is a one-time request. We are looking for someone to re-design the International Bisexual Guide for the Spring issue. Most of the text is already on disk. It's a great portfolio opportunity!


Co-Facilitator for Intro Meeting. Women are needed to co-facilitate introductory meeting for the BBWN. Two and a half hours every other month at the Women's Center in Cambridge. We will train.

THANKS!

The (formerly) Lesbian and Gay Community Center of Boston has a new, inclusive name! The Center has officially changed its name to include the word *Bisexual*. Many thanks to those bi activists and supporters who made it happen!



The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

 **DEADLINE** for the
Feb./March issue:
Friday, January 10, 1992

All submissions in writing, please, and include a name and phone number if possible. **If you do not want your name published, please tell us!** Otherwise we will assume that you do not mind being listed as a contributor. **You may contribute anonymously, or just use your first name if you wish.** Send articles, calendar entries, letters, art, news and views to:

BiWomen, BBWN
338 Newbury Street, 202C
Boston, MA 02115

Letters

Dear BiWomen,
Since I wrote the last

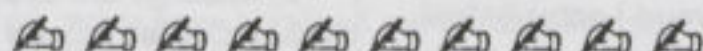
Lavendar Alliance update
[BiWomen, June/July 1991 p12], we
BIs were purged; then we stuck
around in spite of it to be inserted,
sometimes on purpose and sometimes
by people's computers.

Here's the latest: the B-word in Alice Wolf's
propaganda (good stuff, tho') thanks to Robyn,
Gail, Claire, Bet, and all of us who showed up
and/or stuck around at the meetings.

Love & Visibility & Tenacity,

Marcia Deihl

[Marcia includes a letter from the Alice Wolf
Election Committee for Cambridge City Council,
which says, among other things, "The Lesbian/
Gay/Bisexual Community of Cambridge is in a
period of renewed activity and promise. The
founding of the Lavendar Alliance and the
activity of its committees, the feeder march for
Boston Pride, and the Mayor's Pride Breakfast
are all part of the colorful picture in a multi-
cultural Cambridge."]



Dear BiWomen,

I am a member of the women's radio
collective, "Say It, Sister!," a weekly community
radio program with a strong feminist and
progressive political perspective. Our
programming includes international feminist
news reports; analyses of local events;
interviews with authors, activists, survivors and
leaders; live music; and comedy shows, to
describe a selection. "Say It, Sister!" has also
produced the past two annual International
Women's Day broadcasts, all-day
extravaganzas of internationally focused
feminist programming.

"SiS" has always existed on 100% volunteer
energy, most of which has dwindled to a severe
shortage in recent months. The delicate
balance of burnout vs. enthusiasm has tipped
for the worse, due mainly to the lack of
sufficient rejuvenation of the long-term core
group of members. For this and other
unavoidable reasons, we have been forced to
cut our programming in half, down to one show
every other week. The real crisis, however, will
come this January, when our next programming
proposal is due, and when we may be forced to
go off the air entirely unless we've gained new
energy.

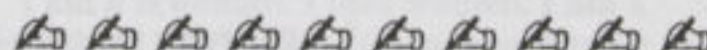
In short, "SiS" NEEDS NEW BLOOD! We
need only a few interested women in order to

transform ourselves back into a lively,
productive and exciting group. NO RADIO
EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY to join, just a
hearty enthusiasm for getting women's voices
heard, and a desire to learn about radio in a
fun, non-competitive women's collective.

As non-commercial radio at WMBR, 88.1 FN,
"SiS" offers the rare opportunity to express
one's feminist creativity over the airwaves
without commercially imposed restrictions on
content. The air space for "SiS" was long fought
for, hard won, and we would truly hate to see
die one of the very few woman-produced,
feminist-oriented radio shows around. Thus, we
are reaching out to our supporting communities
with this letter in hopes that a few enthusiastic
women will want to experience the fun of
creating HERstory by helping to continue a
crucial piece of Boston's feminist tradition.

To get involved, or for more information, call
(617) 623-8681 (eves./weekends) or feel free to
contact us at: "Say It, Sister!", Box 342,
Cambridge, MA 02238

Please tell women in your organizations and
communities about this opportunity. And don't
forget to check us out on alternating
Wednesday evenings, 7-8pm, WMBR, 88.1 FM.
Thanks!



Dear BiWomen:

I prefer not to use the term "bi" when referring
to my bisexuality and I'd like to ask other
women to consider why.

"Bi" feels like a shortcut to me in which the
suffix, the issue of sexuality, is avoided. I do not
mean that I prefer to obsess over sex, but that I
want to acknowledge how dirty I have been
taught to feel as a woman for having any
sexuality. "Bi" feels like a perpetuation of this
secrecy or taboo. Bisexuality has not been
widely understood, so I feel it is important to
name it fully until it is appreciated.

"Bi" is catchy, like a nickname. It sounds like
and perhaps serves a similar purpose to the
word "gay" in replacing homosexual. But it
leaves questions unanswered. It sounds self
assured, but bisexuality is a life experience that
has been under fire in this society, and is still in
a precarious position.

I hear this term used by bisexuals a lot. I also
know that most of my bisexual friends and
acquaintances have felt deeply misunderstood
by others. We can't shortcut the importance of
our identity and expect to feel sure of ourselves.
I personally hope to feel stronger as an
individual bisexual soon. Many people are
oblivious or hostile to our issues though. We
must always incorporate an awareness of this

Letters continue on next page

Remember our
address:

BiWomen

BBWN

338 Newbury
Street, 202C

Boston, MA
02115



The Seventh Edition of
the

**International
Directory of
Bisexual Groups**

is now available
through the East Coast
Bisexual Network

Send \$5 to:

ECBN, c/o LGBCC, 338
Newbury St., Suite 202,
Boston, MA 02115

**Bisexual Pride
T-Shirts
only \$14!**

Send check or
M.O. to BBWN,
338 Newbury
Street, Suite 202,
Boston, MA
02115
- or save \$1.50
postage and
handling: pick
up a T-shirt at the
Bi office for only
\$12.50!



Letters, from preceding page

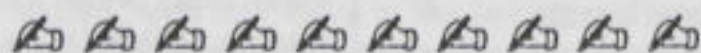
into our activism or we will never be safe.

I have been violently abused by people who misunderstood bisexuality and decided to use this against me. I was humiliated and ignored by friends and family who believe bisexuality is immoral and unnatural. When I identified myself as bisexual in one ad for a roommate, I received brutal and explicit calls for weeks from pimps and pornographers. I have seen the sizeable market of pornography which claims to depict bisexuality, in which women are made to appear willing to have sex with anyone at any time. I have been sexually manipulated in relationships with people who thought my bisexuality was a novelty or gimmick for them to exploit.

These hurtful misconceptions of bisexuality often seem more widespread than self definitions by bisexuals of our life experiences. In the context of a society that still makes sex something "dirty," the word bisexual is already loaded. I associate code words such as "bi" with taking an understanding of something for granted. This often contributes to ghettoization and stereotyping. I feel that as bisexuals we have not been allowed to know ourselves. So a catchword for something as important as our name bothers me.

I'm trying to notice how proud I actually feel identifying as a bisexual. I'm finding that it takes a lot of awareness and commitment. Even more important than our name is the freedom from fear we all ultimately deserve. Do other women have thoughts on these issues?

In Sisterhood,
[Redacted]



Dear BiWomen,

Hi, GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS! My name is Rifka Reichler and I'm the new OE for "BiAngles," an APA for people who identify as Bisexual.

What is an APA? An APA is an Amateur Press Publication. In practical terms it is a self-

published magazine, in which all members contribute a Zine and the OE collates (with no editing) and circulates. Ok, what is a Zine? A Zine is an individual's contribution. Who is the OE? The OE is the person responsible for collating and mailing out each APA. Who made up these alphabet-soup names? Beats the hell out of me!!

What specifically is BiAngles? It is an APA for anyone who identifies as Bisexual, as defined by that person. Topics are as varied as individuals contributing, though they are usually tied in some way to Bisexuality, but they needn't be.

Tell me more. Ok. If you send me \$1.00 I will be more than happy to send a copy of the latest issue. The publication dates for 1991-1992 are: Oct. 1, Dec. 1, Feb. 1, Apr. 1, May 1, July 1, and Sept. 1. The deadlines are set in mush, and are changeable subject to when contributions are sent and the OE's whim.

What else do I need to know?

1. BiAngles is not a magazine that you subscribe to, you join. Membership requirements are a contribution and money to cover mailing, or a note of interest (and money) if you can't make a deadline. Members must contribute at least three times a year or they will be dropped!

2. Mailings are approximately \$1.00 each issue. Copies can be made by the OE for \$.08 a copy.

3. Stamps in lieu of cash are fine, checks made out to: Rifka Reichler or cash are also accepted (and if anyone lives close to SD, they can trade babysitting for mail money!!).

4. To save postage, please try to write on both sides of the page.

5. Leave an inch margin on the LEFT side of the ODD-numbered pages and an inch margin on the RIGHT side of the EVEN-numbered pages, if two-sided. Or an inch margin on the LEFT side of all pages if using only one side.

6. If writing on paper larger than 8-1/2 inches x 11 inches, please fit things into that space, leaving appropriate margins as stated above.

7. Send things to: Rifka Reichler, 702 E 12th Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301. Phone: (605) 996 6168

**DO NOT ADDRESS THINGS TO
BIANGLES!!!!**

I would like to see BiAngles grow and hope that all of you will join us. I have been living in the boonies of South Dakota for three years and BiAngles has been a lifeline for me to be in touch with lots of interesting and fun people.

Peace and Bi for now,
Rifka Reichler,
OE for BiAngles



SHERRY M. COHEN
PSYCHOTHERAPY

P.O. Box 186 (617) 322-3054
West Newton, MA 02165 Insurance/fees negotiable

RESOURCES



PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)

We are a group of parents, friends, lesbians and gays who meet monthly in support of one another. This is an opportunity for information exchange and an informal open discussion. All parents, children and friends are welcome.

We meet on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:15 pm in the basement of the First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington.

Telephone:

(617) 547-2440 or
(508) 562-5807



Why Turn Away a Sister?

The following is reprinted from the Sappho electronic mailing list, with the permission of the author.

These are my thoughts on the current round of the great bisexual debate

What I am failing to understand is what lesbian groups lose by the inclusion of bi women. I hear you saying that we deprive you of something, but it is never stated what. I understand that the issues of bi and lesbian women are not identical, but then, neither are the issues of any two lesbians.

Bi women want to be included as women who love women. It was not so long ago that a lesbian was considered to be (by the lesbian community) as a woman who loves women, not as a woman who fails to love men. It used to be said "a lesbian is any woman who says she is a lesbian." "Political lesbians," heterosexual women who chose to identify as lesbian, were once a valued part of the community (I've been basing these assertions on old writings by lesbians). How many of the lesbian leaders and thinkers and writers and theorists and musicians and organizers of 20 years ago were biwomen? Did they dilute the community? On how many campuses is the woman who is in-your-face out a biwoman, a biwoman willing to take all the shit associated with being an out lesbian? Do they dilute the community? How many biwomen, from Sappho to CJ are claimed as lesbians at pride marches? Is this dilution of the community? How many articulate voices on this list are biwomen? Have you wondered where some of the women disappeared from Sappho recently have gone, and why?

Why does the idea of biwomen "diluting lesbian space" sound to me so much like "miscegenation diluting the white race," so much like "Jews diluting the Aryan race?"

And I hear lesbians talking about biwomen weakening the lesbian community. I hear lesbians saying biwomen make them feel unsafe. That we are too different to belong. If we can walk among you undetected if we don't bring up the b-word, how can we be so different? Is the lesbian community such a fragile thing that our presence will destroy it? Do you really think so little of yourselves to believe that? Sisters, I've always believed the bonds of women loving women, of women supporting women are unbreakably strong. You are

strong beautiful women and biwomen could not destroy your community if they TRIED.

Why turn away an ally? Why turn away a sister? Why turn away those who want to help in the continued building of the community.

I have heard biwomen in lesbian space compared to white women invading the space of lesbians of color. Is this a correct analogy? Or is it more like biracial women in the space of women of color? Is the exclusion of biwomen by lesbians like a women of color caucus excluding white women? Or is it like a white club excluding blacks? Or is it like Latina women feeling uncomfortable with Jewish women feeling uncomfortable with African-American women feeling uncomfortable with Asian women during that third world caucus?

Is the exclusion of biwomen a product of the same dynamic that has excluded TS lesbian, S/M lesbians, and lesbians with boy children? Who fails to meet the lesbian purity test next? Lesbians with men friends? Lesbians with male roommates? Lesbians who socialize with straight women? Who work for male bosses? Who still speak to their fathers and brothers?

I am a biwoman. I love women. I am a feminist. I like being with women. I trust women. I try to be trustworthy to women. I love lesbian culture. I feel emotionally, intellectually, spiritually close to women in a way I have never felt to men, so much so that my sexual attraction to men often feels like a paraphilia. When I meet new people, they assume I'm a lesbian (I had someone tell me yesterday that they thought my "bi pride" pin was a statement of political support, and was surprised that it was self identity). I reject heterosexual privilege. I am your sister.

— Sian Gramates

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Bi Essays Coming This Spring

Closer to Home, a bold collection of essays on the bisexual movement, will be available in May 1992. Edited by Elizabeth Reba Weise, one of the founding members of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, **Closer to Home** is a dynamic anthology of twenty essays by and about women who are bisexual. Bisexual women who choose to be only with women; bisexual women who live with men; bisexual women who used to be lesbian – or straight; bisexual women who see how the struggle for gender pluralism reflect similar struggles over race and class; bisexual women who debate what sexual fluidity means in terms of everyday life choices. For ordering information, contact Seal Press, 3131 Western Avenue, #410, Seattle, WA 98121-1028; phone (206) 283-7844.

Source: Press release



... and Bisexual, from page 1

the history of the bisexual movement; the roles of people of color in the conference and in queer communities; and the re-naming of organizations to include the word *bisexual*. Pam led us in her "and bisexual" chant, to be uttered whenever the names of "lesbian and gay" organizations are mentioned, and we all practiced renaming the conference together. Incidentally, we were pleased and surprised that no one present said that bi's should not be part of "Lesbian and Gay" studies.

In addition to the symposium, there were two panels devoted to bisexual issues. On Saturday at 5 p.m. was the first: *Boundary Politics: Bisexuals in Lesbian and Gay Communities*. The papers presented were:

- *Bisexuality, Lesbians, and Feminism: Twenty Years of Discomfort and Debate*, by Linda Garber;
- *Neutralizing the Political Threat of the Marginal Woman: Lesbians' Beliefs About Bisexual Women*, by Paula Rust; and
- *Bisexuality: A Case Study for Constructionism and Essentialism*, by Edward Stein.

The moderator for the panel was Martin Duberman, who introduced himself as "a gay man who has never had a bisexual impulse in my life."

The second bi panel, held on Sunday at 10:45 a.m., was entitled *Re-contextualizing Bisexuality*. The papers in that panel were:

- *Compulsory Heterosexuality and the Bisexual Existence: Towards a Bisexual-Feminist Understanding of Heterosexism*, by Rebecca Kaplan;
- *Bisexual Theory and the Postmodern Dilemma*, by Stacey Young; and
- *We're Here! We're Bi! What The Hell Does "We" Mean?* by Seth Gordon.

The moderator was Robyn Ochs (it is suspected that she *has* had "bisexual impulses," whatever those may be).

Outside of these exclusively bi panels, bisexuality was rarely mentioned. For example, the most popular panel during the first session, *The United(?) States of Queer Theory*, did not even allude to the existence of bisexuals in queer theory. This experience caused some to question whether the term "queer" ensures bisexual inclusion.

Across from the registration desk, we set up a table containing information from BBWN and ECBN [East Coast Bisexual Network], as well as display samples of bi newsletters from around the country. Throughout the conference, the piles of literature at our table continued to shrink. We had seen many people at the bi gatherings and panels, yet even more were interested in our literature. We watched as hundreds of copies of *Bi Women*, as well as Bisexuality pamphlets, calls for papers, and no-



Re-contextualizing Bisexuality panelists (L to R:) Stacey Young, Rebecca Kaplan, Seth Gordon and Robyn Ochs (moderator)

tices of books about bisexuality were taken. And as the conference progressed, our "bisexual pride" and "visibility" buttons were seen on more and more conference-goers.

The Bisexuality Caucus was held during the lunch break on Saturday. We all got to meet each other, learn more about who the other bi's are, and what we're interested in. It was an opportunity to discuss our concerns about the conference, and articulate a bi agenda. Not all bisexuals necessarily agree on bisexual issues. For example, some of us prefer to encourage using the term "queer," while others prefer to use the word "bisexual," and press for its inclusion alongside "lesbian and gay." We all did agree that increased bisexual participation, by any name, was an important goal. We also discussed our concerns about the increased ghettoization of "marginal" topics in the conference. Papers dealing with issues of bisexuality, feminism and race were each placed in their own panels, and were therefore likely to reach only those who were already aware of those issues. We also noted the call for papers in the conference packet for the Sager Symposium (on *Constructions of Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Identities in the Popular Media*), which especially urged the submission of papers on bisexuality. This is a positive sign for future conferences.

On Saturday at 1:30 p.m. there was a Plenary Symposium on *Race, Ethnicity, and Sexuality*. No other events were scheduled to take place during this symposium, in order that everyone could attend, and most people did. They had a panel of articulate and moving speakers: Samuel Delany, Richard Fung, Yukiko Hanawa, Cherríe Moraga, and Mab Segrest. Some of the issues discussed were: the mutability of racial/ethnic identity, the lack of outreach to communities of color by conference organizers, and the need of marginalized

... and Bisexual continues on next page

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... and Bisexual, from preceding page groups to build strong communities from within. The audience had several minutes to add questions or comments at the end. The speakers were impressive, so it was unfortunate that no forum for real dialogue was provided.

There was a marked absence of feminism in the conference content and structure. Toward the end of the conference, feminists met at a caucus in order to air our concerns, and discuss ways to influence future conferences. Our concerns were highlighted by the ironic fact that this caucus had to be rescheduled, since the conference organizers had originally planned for it to take place at the same time as the main organizational meeting. The caucus drafted a letter to future and present conference organizers addressing concerns about issues of accessibility, and the under-representation of feminists on the organizing committee. Some specifics included the fact that child care had been advertised and then not provided; the absence of ASL interpretation, sliding scale, housing, wheelchair access, and other measures that would have made the conference accessible to many more people. Furthermore, the event was poorly advertised, especially to students, feminists and groups of color, and no effort was made to provide housing other than \$80-dollar-per-night hotels. Additionally, we hope that there will be a greater inclusion of feminist thought in future conferences.


It is interesting to note that there was a very

high level of feminist content in the bi panels.

In order that future conferences might be overseen by a permanent body, an organizational meeting was held for the formation of *The National Association for Lesbian and Gay Studies*. You can imagine our reaction to this name! Robyn Ochs moved that the constitution be amended so that the name would be *The National Association for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Studies*. Like the moderator of the first bisexual panel, the two white men who were facilitating this meeting asserted repeatedly that bisexuality was a controversial topic (despite the persistent lack of controversy in the discussion). They called for debate of the motion. Several people spoke, all in support of the amended name. The motion passed easily, 27 to 5. YAY!

This new organization is intended to allow democratic member input into decisions regarding the conference and Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Studies in general. The constitution requires that the executive board include representatives from differing fields of study. Furthermore it recommends that the board be "diverse" in terms of gender and race/ethnicity. It does not, however, require this "diversity," nor provide any mechanism for guaranteeing this representation. (Additionally, since there was a noted absence of Jewish representation in the content of this year's conference, even in the ethnicity panel, a motion was made, and passed, to consider Jews as an ethnic group.)

Other topics discussed in the business meeting were the underlying hierarchical structure of the organization. (Who decided to use Robert's Rules of Order, and who does Robert think he is, anyway?) In the course of discussion we learned that the constitution was modeled after that of *The 18th Century Studies Association*. We discussed the lack of occasion for input, and decided to hold a final plenary session in future years in which participants could evaluate the conference, and to include a feedback form in future conference packets.

So far there are no plans for a conference in 1992, but we hear the 1993 conference will be held in San Francisco. It was an exciting conference, and we enjoyed being part of this growing and changing field, and actively affecting some of that change. We hope the input of bisexuals will have a great impact, extending beyond a mere name change. Perhaps in future worlds, we will have changed things to the point where the words we use today can no longer describe them. In the meantime, we still have our indelible purple pen for anyone who wants to add the words "and bisexual" to their "Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference" t-shirts! 

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1991 International Bisexual Conference

By Liz A. Highleyman

AMSTERDAM

The First International Bisexual Conference was held October 4-5 at the Vrije Universiteit (Free University) in Amsterdam. The conference was sponsored by seven Dutch bisexual groups, and the majority of the 250 attendees were from the Netherlands. The American and British bisexual communities were well represented, with attendees from BBWN/BBMN in Boston and from San Francisco and Washington, DC. Members of bisexual groups from several European countries were present, as well as people who had had little luck in finding or establishing bisexual groups in their areas; reportedly thirty countries were represented (most by only one or two people). The conference was the first official attempt to bring bisexuals together for an international gathering, although recent U.S. and U.K. conferences have been international in fact if not in name.

The morning sessions both days consisted of academic presentations. This was a contrast to most U.S. conferences, which tend to be run by activists, with more of a focus on bisexual community building and politics. It was disconcerting to hear professional sexologists presenting as scientific fact things which contradicted many people's lived experience as bisexuals. A more participatory, discussion-based format would have been welcome. A lot of emphasis was put on the biology rather than the social aspects of sexuality. A few speakers conflated sexuality with sexual behavior and gender, and bisexuality with androgyny.

The presentations pointed up some differences in the way European and American bisexuals conceive of bisexuality and the bisexual community and movement. Dutch researcher Gert Hekma suggested that bisexuals should look beyond the gay/lesbian identity and focus on developing a unique bisexual identity. While many gay men and lesbians define gender as the primary component of sexuality, Hekma encouraged bisexuals to acknowledge that desire is as much (or more) based on other features, such as appearance, personality, age, or activity preference. Many American bisexual activists, on the other hand, claim that bisexuals share a common identity with gay men and lesbians based on shared same-sex attractions and a common struggle against heterosexism, and should integrate themselves into the gay and lesbian community.

Another speaker, Iteke Weeda, a Professor of Emancipation from Groningen, was somewhat bi-supremacist. Weeda sees bisexuality

as more highly evolved and superior to homo- or heterosexuality. She claimed that in a future society in which the population is aging (resulting in a surplus of older women) and people need a broad extended network for economic security (given the failure of the nuclear family and the welfare state), androgynous bisexuality will be the preferred mode. Most American bi activists, on the other hand, think of bisexuality as part of a continuum of valid options, and believe that all people should be free to love who they choose.

Given the scarcity and inaccuracy of existing research on bisexuality (in which bisexuals have often been lumped with homosexuals), Ron Fox's presentation of his research results was eagerly anticipated. Fox, a San Francisco researcher and psychotherapist, presented the results of his survey over the past two years of 900 self-identified bisexuals. His findings show, as expected, that bisexuals are a diverse group. Thirty-five percent had previously identified as gay or lesbian, while ten percent had identified as straight. Many of the younger respondents identified first as bisexual. Fox hypothesized that the bisexual label is more well known and the bisexual identity is more available to people coming out today. About fifty percent of the respondents were not involved in any bisexual or gay organizations.

The workshops were more varied in topic and more "grassroots" in organization than the academic presentations. The workshops spanned the gamut from the personal to the political to the cultural, and included sessions on bisexual health care and HIV, spirituality, body image, safer sex, local community organizing, social change, orgy planning, bisexual characters in film, and a cross-cultural exploration of sexuality and activism.

The organizers did not seem to be as conscious of gender parity and participation by people of color as organizers in the U.S. (who, while they often don't succeed, usually do make an effort). Whether someone was a woman or a person of color was considered less important than their ideas, emphasizing the greater importance of ideological over identity politics in Europe. The dynamics of sexism and racism may also be quite different compared to the U.S., leading to different priorities. Language difficulties were sometimes problematical. All the academic presentations and most of the workshops were in English, as this was the language common to the most participants, which forced several presenters to use a non-native language.

I co-facilitated a cross-cultural workshop with Tom Geller, an American bi activist now

Amsterdam *continues on next page*

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living in Rotterdam. Most participants were from North America, the U.K., or Northern Europe, thus limiting the cross-cultural scope, but nevertheless some fascinating differences emerged. Most striking was the way European bisexuals and lesbians and gay men conceive of their sexuality. Sexuality, it seems, is not so much a political identity, defined in terms of being a member of an oppressed group, as it is in the U.S. There is comparatively more emphasis with ideological politics (for example, is someone a marxist or a socialist-feminist?), and less on identity politics.

The issue of domestic partnerships was one that came up in the workshop, and one which gives a good example of cultural differences. In some European countries, including the Netherlands, unmarried partnerships are common. "Respectable" middle-class heterosexuals may live together for years and raise children without being married. There is no equivalent to our society's concept of "living in sin," and the idea of the "illegitimacy" of a child of unmarried parents is weak or non-existent. The prevalence of such partnerships among opposite-sex couples would seem to make it easier for same sex couples to live together as partners. In the U.S., we must fight both oppression directed at same-sex relationships and discrimination against the unmarried. Unfortunately, European societies do not seem to have come much further than the U.S. in terms of recognizing and accepting relationships between more than two people, regardless of gender.

In many ways, Amsterdam was an ideal site for the conference. The city is known for its international atmosphere, as well as its acceptance of minority sexualities and its tolerance of sexual expression. I was told that this tolerance is a rather recent development (largely a result of the horror of the Nazi occupation of World War II) and is considerably stronger in the cities. Sexual displays in the form of prostitution, sex shows, and pornography shops are ubiquitous. Whether due to or

despite this sexual openness and the prevalence of the sex industry, Amsterdam felt much less threatening for a woman alone than most American cities, and the prevailing attitudes toward sex and sexuality seemed much more healthy. Sex and nudity are seen as improper in certain situations, but not as evil or sinful. The tolerance in Amsterdam made the narrowness of attitudes in the U.S. all the more obvious by comparison.

Several American activists hoping to collect Dutch queer political T-shirts and buttons were disappointed to find that these did not exist. It does not seem to occur to most Europeans to announce their sexuality in such a manner, even if they are out and involved in bisexual or gay organizations. Perhaps the greater societal acceptance of non-heterosexuality makes being bisexual or gay seem like a variant personal characteristic rather than a political statement. While the efforts of groups in the U.S. such as Queer Nation to solidify a queer cultural identity are often exciting, it was pleasing to spend time where one's sexuality is not considered to be the central feature of one's identity, and that lacked the "us" vs. "them" warfare mentality that this can engender, a mentality that often leaves bisexuals feeling caught in the middle and not really accepted by either "side".

It was refreshing to go to a disco and see homo, het, and bi people dancing and interacting with one another with little regard for sexual orientation, women with women, women with men, and men with men. In Dutch, the preferred terms are "homo," "het," and "bi"; these are not considered derogatory, and do not carry the political implications or double meaning of our "gay," "queer," and "straight". While there is considerable integration of the sexualities in Amsterdam, conference participants spoke of deep divisions existing between gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals in other countries, especially England and Germany.

The opportunity to examine differences in how sexual identity is thought of and how bisexuals organize in different countries and cultures is a valuable feature of international conferences. I was a bit disappointed that the organizers did not do enough outreach. Even modest efforts should have been able to draw more attendees from the European countries surrounding the Netherlands; a more concerted effort would be needed to bring in attendees from Southern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, in order to make it a truly international and multicultural gathering. These gatherings serve a valuable purpose in providing an opportunity for attendees from widely separated locations

Amsterdam continues on next page

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London Hosts Ninth U.K. Bi Conference



The following comments about the 9th UK National Bisexual Conference, held in London September 20-22, were taken from a computer discussion list on bisexuality (for those of you who know about these things, it's called BISEXU_L @brownvm.brown.edu). The comments are reprinted here with the author's permission.

I was only able to attend the Sunday of this event. . . .

The conference was organised in seven parallel sessions (yes, seven!), and attended by 250 people, making it the largest bisexual conference in the UK to date.

The workshop on Sex and Gender centered on identifying the confusion surrounding him/her man/woman male/female terms, both for the purposes of external identification and internal identity. Although there is still some confusion between different usages among varying modes of the English language (British, Irish, US American, Canadian, Australian, etc.), the most enlightening example was that of Kate Anderson, who led the discussion: she was born with a man's body but a female identity, and is now in the transsexual mid-phase process growing breasts and waiting for the operation. As a lesbian, she formerly appeared to be the public stereotype of a man interested in women, but will now be able to project her own image correctly as a female interested in other females (I think I've got this right!).

After lunch came a packed session on the Bisexual Erotic Imagination, led by journalist

Cherry Smith. She read and commented on several extracts from gay, lesbian and bisexual literature, and identified the erotic content as belonging to the fulfillment or part-fulfillment of fantasy. The second half of this workshop consisted of everyone (some 70 people) writing down their most cherished/taboo fantasy on a slip of paper, folding it, and putting it on the floor in a pile in the middle of the room. The pile was well mixed, and everyone then took one and read it out. As each was identified only by a sign of gender preference, those listening had to guess what gender the author was. Interestingly, a good 80% of the fantasies involved activities which were easily achievable (e.g. group sex, i.e., motss [members of the same sex] sex, with motos [members of the

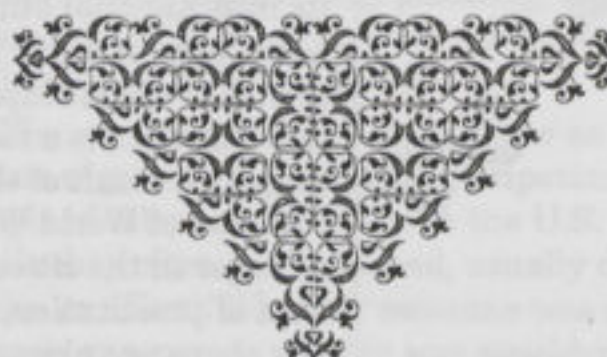
opposite sex] watching or participating; coprophagia; bondage and bestiality) and had probably already been done by some if not many of those present. Only a small number involved impossible or criminal activities (child sex, necrophelia). The fantasy for group sex was particularly strong, and there was some discussion of this desire being more prevalent among bisexuals than among other queer orientations.

The final session on Building a Bisexual Community is probably of more direct relevance to Europe, where bisexual organisations tend to be less well developed than in the USA (with some notable exceptions such as Holland). The strong feeling was that any such organisation needed to foster the attributes of safety (space), strength of purpose and identity, openness, communication, supportiveness, and forgiveness of mistakes: none of which is surprising, but it demonstrated that the UK community is well capable of building on their existing structure. With goodwill (and some hard work) it should be possible to transfer the technology to other, less well developed areas.

One slightly sour note was sounded by several of the women at the conference: some macho sexist harassment (verbal and physical) of bi women by bi men was noted and reported. I found this particularly disheartening at such a meeting, but it shows some men still have a long way to go in self-education and self-analysis.

Several people showed interest in this list and the concept of email, which is virtually unknown outside the research and academic fields in the UK: we may expect some new members shortly!

///Peter (Silmaril)



Amsterdam, from preceding page

to meet one another, network, and share our experiences as bisexual women and men, as much through informal interactions as through planned presentations.

The next international bisexual conference will be held in London, probably in the fall of 1992. Some American organizers have proposed the idea of hosting an international conference in New York City in 1994 to coincide with the twenty-fifth anniversary of Stonewall.



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Local News



Local contributing authors to the anthology *Bi Any Other Name* appeared at Glad Day Bookshop in Boston for a book-signing last April. Standing, left to right: **Amanda Udis-Kessler, Liz Highleyman, Cliff Arneson, Bobbi Keppel, Wayne Bryant.** Seated: **Robyn Ochs.** Not shown: **Rebecca Gorlin.**

Foster Equality

In response to the lawsuit brought by Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) and the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, the state's Department of Social Services has changed its foster care placement regulations, returning to a best interest of the child standard so that lesbians and gay men are no longer barred from serving as foster parents.

Source: *GLAD's 1990 Annual Report.* Their address is P.O. Box 218, Boston, MA 02112. Telephone: (617) 426-1350 FAX: (617) 426-3594. ▼

Coalition Files Sodomy Repeal Bill

On Wednesday, Nov. 6, the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights filed a comprehensive sex statutes reform bill in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, which, if passed, would repeal the sodomy, adultery and fornication laws and modify the statutes concerning "lewd and lascivious behavior."

The main sponsor of the bill is Rep. David Cohen (D-Newton) and the measure has 22 co-sponsors in the House, as well as five backers in the State Senate and tentative backing of the Weld Administration. The bill, entitled "An Act Relative to the Reform of Archaic Laws Implicating Private, Consensual, Non-Commercial Intimate Conduct Between Adults," will be taken up by the Massachusetts House next January.

"These sex laws are used to deny us our rights, they're used as an excuse to deny AIDS education, they're used to keep condoms out of schools, and in many ways, they're part of the reason that people bash us on the streets," said Gordon Linnoff, Board Member of the Coalition and Head Lobbyist for the sex statutes reform bill. "We have to stop being criminals so we're not criminalized by society."

Source: *IN. Subscriptions: \$77 for third class, \$130 for first class. IN, 398 Columbus Ave, Suite 283, Boston, MA 02116. Phone (617) 424-8886 FAX (617) 424 8861. Published every Tuesday.* ▼

Gay Rights Bill Update

Following a filing of four petitions to put the recently-passed Gay Rights Bill on the ballot as a referendum, Massachusetts Attorney General Scott Harshbarger has ruled all four petitions filed by the Citizens for Traditional Morality to be unconstitutional.

The first two petitions (one of which would have banned any mention of gays in the media and the other would have banned gays from being teachers and homosexuality from being presented in any school) were obviously unconstitutional in their content.

The third and fourth petitions were more threatening petitions that involved revising particular statutes to remove the words "sexual orientation." Two of the original eleven signatories renounced their signatures. They had not realized they were leading the movement by signing the initial 10-signature petition to the Attorney General. They thought they were two of the 70,000+ signatures required to put the issue on the ballot.

Harshbarger allowed their sworn affidavits to nullify the effect of their signatures on the petitions. He did not rule on the constitutionality of the issues involved, since they did not even have the required 10 signatures as required by the constitution.

Source: *Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, P.O. Box 611, Cambridge, MA 02238* ▼

Around the World in Eighty Seconds



Canadian Military Ready to Reverse Ban of Gays, Bis

The Canadian military is expected to revoke its ban on the hiring and promotion of gays, lesbians & bisexuals. In an October 9 statement, the Canadian Chief of the Defense Staff gave the Pentagon advance notice of the impending announcement of the policy change: "The Canadian Forces of today believe an individual's sexual orientation is irrelevant to whether or not that individual can perform his or her job." When this decision becomes official, Canada will join many other countries, such as Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Brazil, Spain, Germany, Israel, Belgium and France in allowing gay men, lesbians and bisexual to serve in their military.

Source: Submitted by Robyn Ochs; from "Our Own Community Press," November 1991. ▽

Resolution To Overturn Gay and Bi Military Ban Introduced In Congress

(Washington, D.C.) — As activists organized a Veterans Day march on the Pentagon, Rep. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) readied a precedent-setting resolution in Congress to overturn the government's ban on homosexuals serving in the military.

Her Nov. 6 measure is designed to "express the sense of the House," that President Bush be urged to rescind Dept. of Defense Directive 1332.14 § H.1. It would allow all Americans serving now or enlisting, regardless of sexual orientation, to "not be prevented from, or punished for" serving their country.

"It is time to put a stop to this legacy of unfair and malignant discrimination in the armed services," said Boxer, who serves on the House Armed Forces Committee from San Francisco's 6th District. "Mustering out and sometimes court-martialing [service people] because of their sexual orientation is a profound waste of government resources."

Her resolution is thought to be the first Federal legislation to contain the words "gay" and "lesbian." The Hate Crimes Statistics Act referred to "homosexuals" and the pending amendment to the Civil Rights Act mentions "sexual orientation."

"Thanks to veterans [such as Boston's own Cliff Arneson -Ed.] and others who were very adamant, bisexuals will also be acknowledged,"

said Tim Drake of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, who helped write the bill. He praised Boxer's acceptance of such inclusive language, saying "At last we are able to use the wording we prefer."

Source: IN. Subscriptions: \$77 for third class, \$130 for first class. IN, 398 Columbus Ave, Suite 283, Boston, MA 02116. Phone (617) 424-8886 FAX (617) 424 8861. Published every Tuesday. ▽

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FIRE began broadcasting May 1st 1991, one hour a day in magazine format on RADIO FOR PEACE INTERNATIONAL, an independent shortwave station located in Costa Rica. Soon we will expand to three hours daily. Respecting our worldwide audience, we will provide one hour in English, one in Spanish and one in other languages.

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Amnesty International to Adopt Lesbian and Gay Prisoners

Amnesty International has decided to adopt as prisoners of conscience those imprisoned for their homosexuality, including those arrested for homosexual acts. Until now, Amnesty International has assisted some imprisoned lesbian and gay activists, but not those arrested for simply being themselves or those arrested on the basis of sexual conduct. The decision is the result of an intensive 12-year effort by lesbian and gay people around the world to change the global human rights group's policy on homosexuality. ▽

Dear Boston
BiWomen,

I brought a rough draft of this leaflet to the "sex radicals" workshop of the Bi Fest last June. I got a very positive response from everyone in the workshop, and I said I would send you the final version. So here it is, for for anyone interested. Feel free to make copies and distribute it. If anyone has any comments, they can write to the P.O. Box at the bottom of the leaflet.

Thanks!

Tamara Bower

WOMEN DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF DISEASE: We demand that men take responsibility for using condoms, without protest and without reluctance. We demand full funding for AIDS research, for research on other diseases, and free quality medical care for everyone.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF UNWANTED CHILDREN: Lift all restrictions on abortion and its funding: Free abortion on demand for all women. We demand development of safe, effective, pleasurable birth control, available to all, including teenagers.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF FORCED STERILIZATION: Sterilization is used as a form of genocide against women of color without their knowledge or consent. We demand an end to this immediately.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF RAPE: including date rape! We demand the right to say No. We demand to go anywhere at any time on any street--safely, and without harassment.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF INTIMIDATION AND WITHOUT PRESSURE: We demand the right to become sexually intimate with someone at our own pace.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF DECEPTION: Men tell women lies about their sexual history and drug use in order to avoid using condoms. Other lies men tell women in order to get sex: "I'm not married." "You are the only one." "I love you." "I won't get you pregnant." "I won't cum in your mouth." We demand honesty.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF MORAL CONDEMNATION: Not from parents, teachers, social workers, doctors, neighbors, the religious, or anyone. We demand the right to have sex outside of marriage and without parental consent. We demand the right to have multiple partners, and the right to casual sex, if we so choose.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF ABUSE: Over a million women in the U.S. are battered by their husbands and boyfriends. We demand an end to men's violence toward women, and an end to their emotional and sexual abuse toward us as well. We demand an end to incest and abuse of children.

WE DEMAND SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF EXPLOITATION: We demand that women's jobs in the sex industry be decriminalized, and an end to police harassment and other men's harassment of sex workers. We demand an end to the stigmatization of sex workers, and that they be treated with respect. We support sex workers organizing for control over their working conditions, and to take over the industry. We demand that women's incomes be doubled--so that work in prostitution and pornography are not the only higher paying jobs for many women. We demand an end to sexual harassment of women on all our jobs.

WE DEMAND LESBIAN SEX WITHOUT FEAR OF VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, ARREST, RIDICULE, OR REJECTION: Women's sexuality is not limited to our relationships with men. We demand safety and full legal rights and protections for lesbians and bisexual women.

WE DEMAND SEX WHEN WE WANT IT, ON OUR TERMS, AND IN SAFETY--EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY. AND WE DEMAND THE RIGHT NOT TO HAVE SEX.

WE DEMAND THIS OF MEN--as a class and as individuals--AND OF THE INSTITUTIONS THEY CONTROL: the government, the laws, the police, the religions, the corporations, the medical establishment, the school system, and the family.

We make these demands through confrontations, demonstrations, education, organization; through legal action, through illegal action. We will attack the system by every means available until we end the fear and the pain that all women live with--and for sex to be liberated into a fully pleasurable experience.

WOMEN TAKE POWER!

PO Box 1254, Knickerbocker Station, New York, NY 10002





CALENDAR, from back page

Women's Coffee House with Marcia Harris. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$6. Info: call Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

Jan. 27 ♦ Monday

BBWN Volunteer Night. Help stuff the Feb./March newsletter! Great fun! Nothing like repetitive manual labor to pass the time. Seriously, it's a perfect opportunity to catch up on the latest news, gossip, rumors . . . and it's always a pleasure to see old friends and meet new ones. **Help send this newsletter out to all those women whose only connection with other bi women is through the newsletter.** The more newsletter-stuffers, **THE FASTER WE FINISH!!** Please come. 6-10pm at THE CENTER. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Feb. 1 ♦ Saturday

Women's Coffee House, open mike—women's comedy. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$6. For more info call Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

Feb. 5 ♦ Sunday

Dykes Dialogue, an informal discussion group for women. Topic: lesbian and bisexual women. 4-6pm at THE CENTER. Info: (617) 247-2927.

Feb. 8 ♦ Saturday

BBWN potluck brunch at Robyn O.'s place, Central Square area, 12 noon. Call (617) BIS-MOVE for details and directions.

Feb. 15 ♦ Saturday

Women's Coffee House with Sue Ryder. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$6. For more info call Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

March 7 ♦ Saturday

Women's Coffee House, movie TBA. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$6. For more info call Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

March 14 ♦ Saturday

BBWN potluck brunch at Sue R.'s place, 12 noon. Call (617) BIS-MOVE for details and directions.



Bisexual Fiction Anthology Call for Submissions

Submissions of up to 6,000 words are being accepted through March 1992 for the first anthology of bisexual fiction. For information, send self-addressed, stamped envelope to ANTHOLOGY, 463 Hanover Avenue, Oakland, CA 94606-1115.



March 21 ♦ Saturday

Women's Coffee House with Tricia Langlois. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$6. For more info call Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

May 15-17 ♦ Friday-Sunday

ECBN Retreat. The East Coast Bisexual Network is planning a retreat at Rowe Camp in Rowe, MA—mark your calendars now! Watch upcoming newsletters for more information.



Ongoing:

Sundays:

Alateen Group open to bisexual, lesbian and gay youth 22 and under who are affected by alcoholism in a family member or a close friend. 6pm. At THE CENTER.

Mondays:

Bisexual Alcoholics Anonymous. 7:30-8:30pm, Mass. General Hospital, under Amphitheater (go past the Lower Amphitheater, take stairs up 3 flights). Closed speaker-discussion. Info: Harold at (617) 876-8059.

Tuesdays:

Bisexual Women's Rap Group. 7:30pm-10pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Central Square, Cambridge. All women welcome. Info: (617) 354-6658.

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Freedom Trail Band Rehearsals. Concert and marching band, no auditions. 7:30-9:30pm. Location and info: Kathy (617) 236-5978.



Wednesdays:

Bisexual Children of Alcoholics. 7:30pm. An Al-Anon meeting for bisexual children of alcoholics. Mass. General Hospital, lower amphitheater (next to the emergency room entrance), Boston. Info: Marge at (617) 259-1559.

Women's Job Support Network meets 6:30-8:30pm in the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA. This group is free and is a place where women can share resources/experiences, increase motivation, relieve stress, and network with contacts. Info: (617) 354-8807.

Third Thursday of each month:

Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Speakers Bureau meets 8-10pm at THE CENTER. Info: (617) 354-0133.

Fridays:

The Friday Night Video Series at THE CENTER, 7pm. Suggested donation \$1. Info: (617) 247-2927.

Steppin' Out on Broadway, Country/Western dances for Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Friends. 8pm dance lessons. 9pm-midnight: Texas two-step, Swing, and Line dancing. Smoke/alcohol-free, juice bar, DJ. No partner necessary. Admission \$5. At "On Broadway," 880 Broadway, Somerville. Info: Dee at (617) 562-0294.



Fourth Saturday of the month:

Slow Dancing at the Center, 9pm-1am. Featuring romantic music and a slow dance lesson. Suggested donation \$5. Info: (617) 247-2927.

No Comment

Dear BiWomen,

This personal ad appeared recently in a newsletter I receive (won't identify the organization, altho they did print it).

I could barely restrain myself from leaving any one of a number of scathing messages.

GWF, desires to meet positive, intelligent humanitarian, eco-educated, empowered lesbians. I'm attractive, creative, with high self-esteem rising up on love in life. Interested? LM anytime for ~~me~~ ~~me~~. No cigs, bi's, cat allergies, bar people or separatists.

Are we really as undesirable as cigarette smoke and cat dander?

Bi!

BiCEP, from page 1

We are committed to working for the acceptance of all freely chosen relationship options, sexual preferences, and manners of loving, and for the equality of all people.

BiCEP has been the political arm of the Boston Bisexual Networks since June 1988. We are a decentralized collective that concentrates on direct action. Since BiCEP has formed we have worked on a variety of activities:

- Sponsoring an October 1988 Coming Out Day outing
- Opposing NBC's "Midnight Caller" show, which presented a negative portrayal of a bisexual man as an AIDS carrier
- Participating in gay and lesbian rights and AIDS action demonstrations
- Improving the accessibility of the 1989 ECBN Bisexual Conference
- Creating and distributing bisexual visibility materials such as brochures and Bisexual Pride stickers

Bisexuals experience many of the same types of discrimination as gay men and lesbians, and it is necessary that we take part in these struggles.

At the same time, bisexuals are in a unique position to build bridges between the gay/lesbian and heterosexual cultures.

While we recognize that we can maximize our accomplishments by working with groups that share our goals, we also realize that it is important for bisexuals to create a visible and thriving community of our own, and to participate in political action as bisexuals.

We are just starting up again, so new members (and old) are welcome to join. We will be discussing upcoming projects such as organizing bi political forums, political discussion groups, demonstrations, bisexual visibility actions and more. So bring your ideas. No previous political organizing experience is necessary, nor do you need to be "out" to make a valuable contribution!



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☐ Matron Saint (WOW!): \$100

Send this form along with your check to:

BBWN

338 Newbury Street, 202C

Boston, MA 02115



CALENDAR

THE CENTER

is the Lesbian, Gay and
Bisexual Community Center,
338 Newbury Street, Suite
202C, Boston, MA 02115.

NEGAL sponsors and supports gender-free contra, square and traditional dances for the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities in many cities in the Northeastern U.S. They also welcome supportive heterosexuals to dance at all events. No experience is necessary. All dances are taught. Info: NEGAL, P.O. Box 634, Cambridge, MA 02140.

Women's Job Support Network meets 6:30-8:30pm in the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA. This group is free and is a place where women can share resources/experiences, increase motivation, relieve stress, and network with contacts. Info: (617) 354-8807.



Dec. 1 ♦ Sunday

Bi Space. A place for all bi people to come and meet other bisexuals and talk about bisexual issues. There's no agenda and no set topic, just a friendly space for whatever develops. A \$2 donation is requested to cover costs. At THE CENTER, room 204, 8-10pm. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Dec. 6 ♦ Friday

Swingtime, Boston's monthly Lesbian/Gay/Bi Swing Dance, 8:15pm-midnight. Featuring Cheek to Cheek, Boston's own Lesbian and Gay Swing Orchestra. Smoke-/alcohol-free. Beginners welcome. \$5 admission, includes refreshments. Set-up, clean-up volunteers get in free. At the Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Harvard Square. Info: (617) 629-2219.

Dec. 7 ♦ Saturday

NEGAL dance (tentative) 8pm at the First Unitarian Church, Centre and Eliot Streets, Jamaica Plain, MA. Tickets are \$5. Info: Janet at (617) 522-2216 or at Phil (617) 729-9206. (See details at left)

Women's Coffee House with Doshie Powers. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$6. For more info call Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

Dec. 14 ♦ Saturday

NEGAL Holiday Contra and Square dance with Chris Ricciotti calling. Bring holiday baked goods! 8pm at the Greater Hartford G&L Community Center, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT. Tickets are \$5. For info call David at (203) 456-0500. (See details at left)



On Monday, November 18, a number of BBWN women, especially those who are currently active in the Network, gathered at Robyn's for a connecting and brainstorming meeting. We talked about what we each have been doing within BBWN as well as outside in the bi community and beyond. After a thorough appreciation of each other's hard work and energy, we moved on to discuss where the Network stands and where we want to go from here.

The discussion was very productive – so much so that another, similar meeting has been planned to continue to develop the ideas and plans. **All women are welcome at this next meeting:**

Sunday ♦ December 15

BBWN movers and shakers, leaders and followers, and the just plain curious will again meet at Robyn's house in Cambridgeport 7-9pm. Call (617) BIS-MOVE for directions.



Dec. 16 ♦ Monday

Bisexual Committee Engaging in Politics (BiCEP) general meeting, 7pm at THE CENTER. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE. (See page 1 for details!)

Dec. 18 ♦ Wednesday

Biversity Boston general meeting from 8-10pm at THE CENTER. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Dec. 21 ♦ Saturday

Women's Coffee House with WES. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$10. For more info call Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

Monthly Bi Brunch at Sibel's Restaurant, 100 Peterborough Street, in the Fenway; meet at 10:45am. Nearest T stop is Fenway on the green line. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Dec. 28 ♦ Saturday

NEGAL Holiday Contra and Square dance with Chris Ricciotti calling. Bring holiday baked goods! 8pm at the First Unitarian Church, Centre and Eliot Streets, Jamaica Plain, MA. Tickets are \$5. For info call Janet at (617) 522-2216 or Phil (617) 729-9206. (See details at left)

Jan. 4 ♦ Saturday

"Come out and bring in the new year" bisexual dance— sponsored by Biversity Boston. This smoke- and alcohol-free event will take place from 9pm - 1am at the First Congregational Church, 11 Garden St., Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA (nearest T stop is Harvard on the red line). Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

Women's Coffee House with Betsy Salkind. Show at 8pm, doors open at 7pm at THE CENTER. Suggested donation is \$6. Info: Denise Sorese c/o THE CENTER (617) 247-2927.

Jan. 5 ♦ Sunday

Bi Space. At THE CENTER, room 204, 8-10pm. Call (617) BIS-MOVE for information. (See Dec. 1 listing)

Jan. 11 ♦ Saturday

BBWN potluck brunch at Kathleen H.'s place, Copley Square area, 12 noon. Call (617) BIS-MOVE for details and directions.



Jan. 15 ♦ Wednesday

The first meeting of **BBWN's new Social Events Committee**, 7-9pm at THE CENTER. Help plan social events for BBWN. Share ideas! All women welcome.

Jan. 18 ♦ Saturday

Monthly Bi Brunch, location TBA; meet at 10:45am. Info: (617) BIS-MOVE.

